

# CRASHED



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ORCHID<sup>TM</sup>







# ORCHARD™

VOLUME 2

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**DAN JACKSON**

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#### ORCHID VOLUME 2

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≥Heh-heh≤  
YEAH, SURE,  
SURE. JUST COME  
WITH US, BABY.  
ALL THE BOYS  
WOULD **LOVE** TO  
HELP YOU...

AND WHEN  
WE'RE DONE  
THERE'S ONE OR  
TWO PIMPS HERE  
WHO'LL PAY BIG  
TO OWN A YOUNG  
WALK LIKE HER.  
≥Heh≤



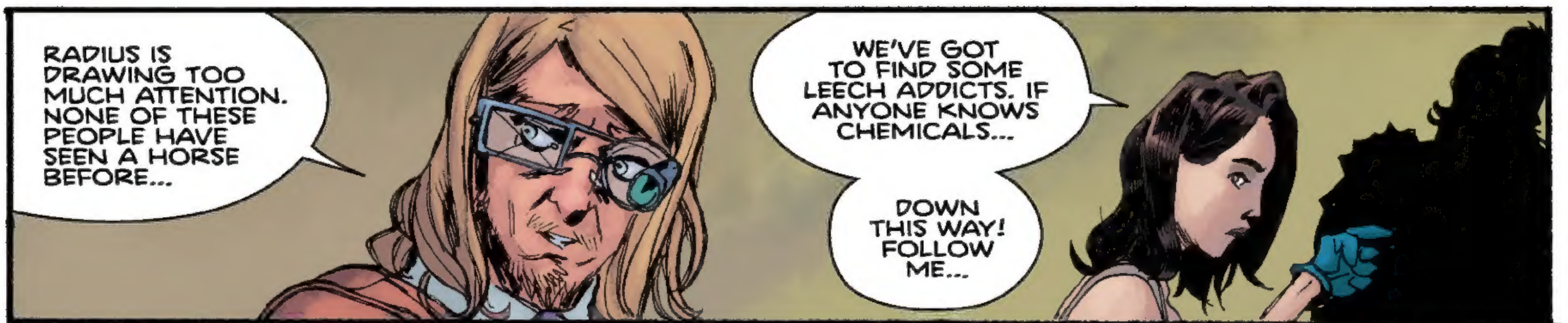
HAH!



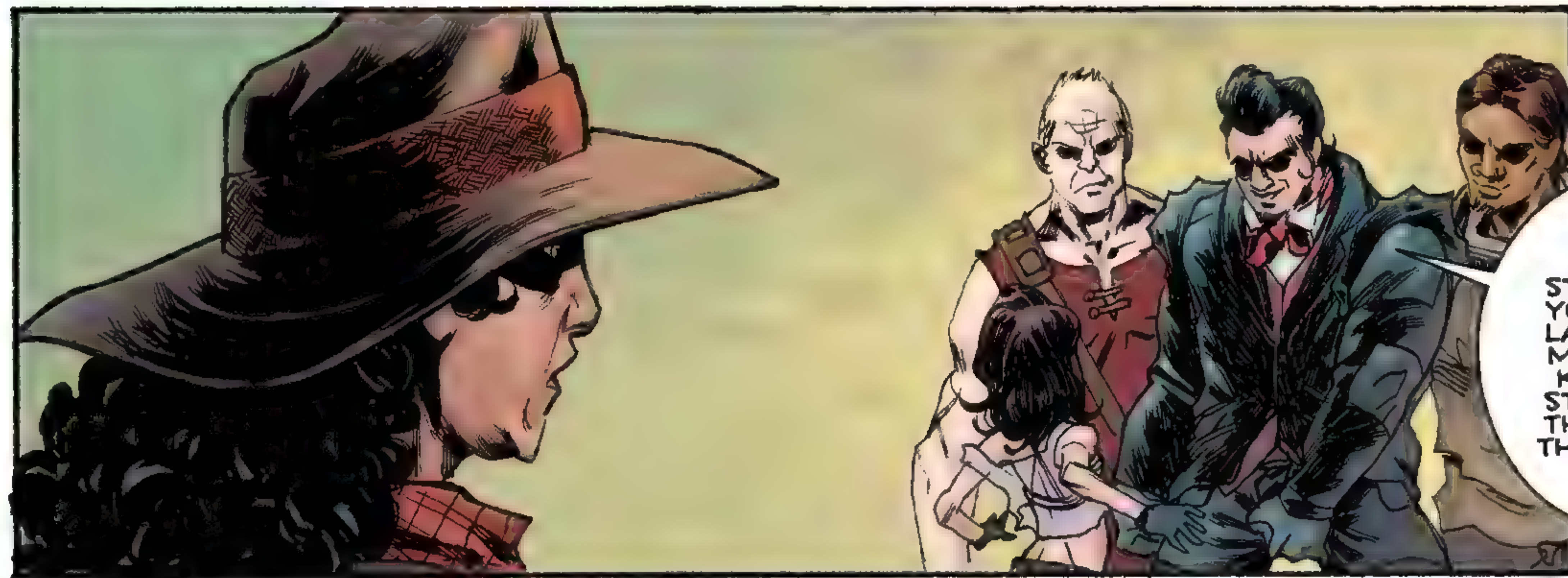
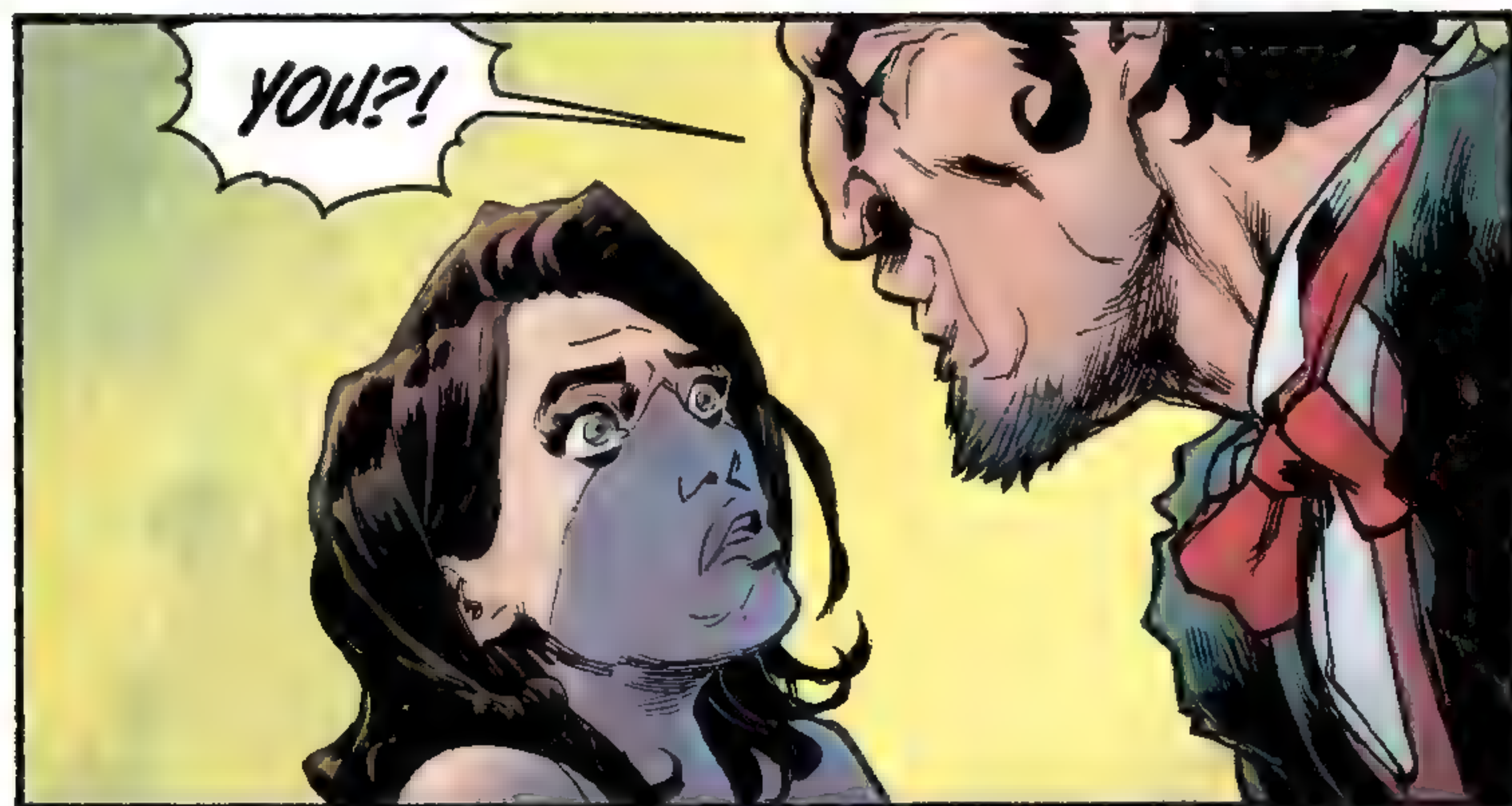
YES, ORCHID,  
THAT WAS A  
SPLENDID IDEA,  
REALLY IT WAS!  
NOW...um, COULD  
YOU **PLEASE** PUT  
YOUR SHIRT  
BACK ON...?



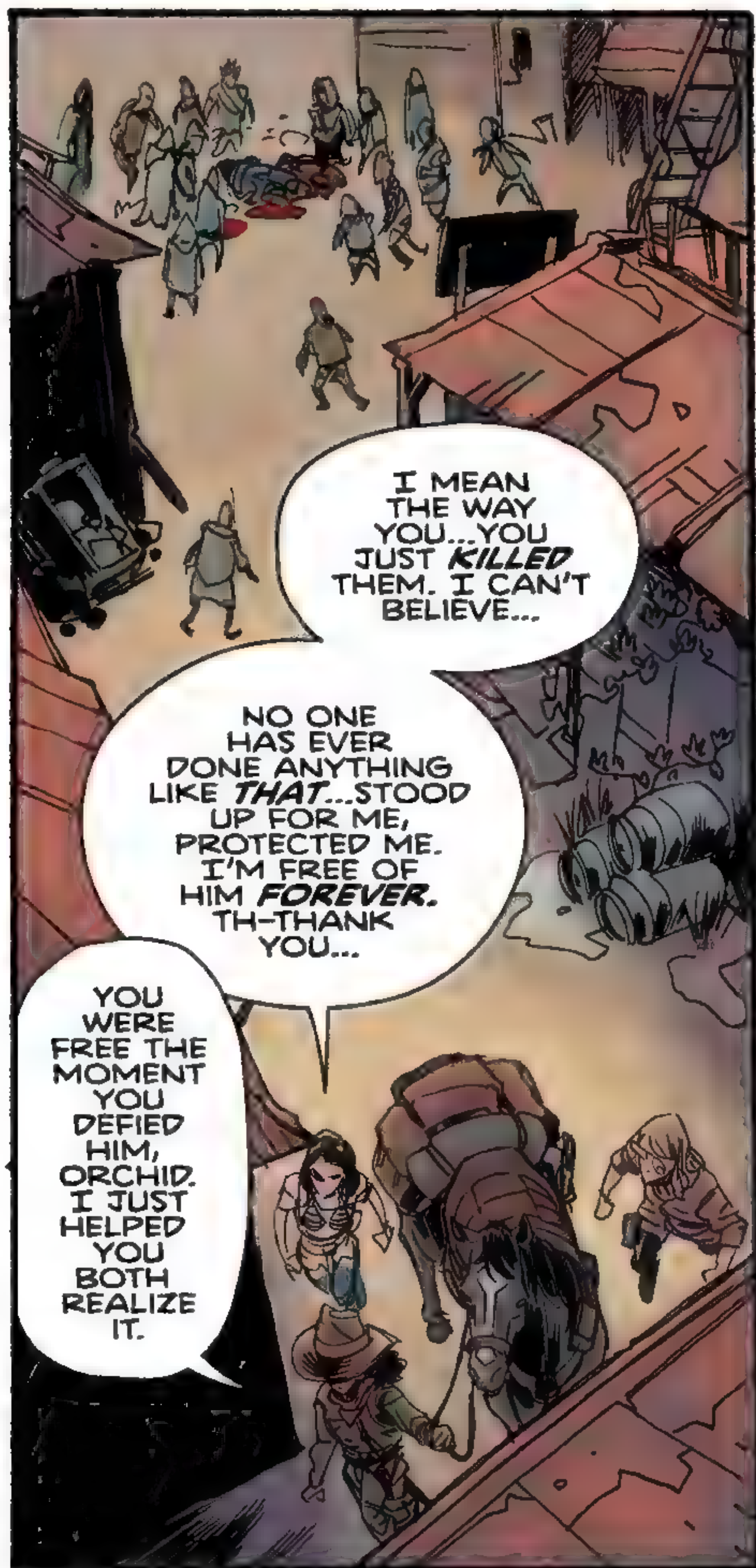
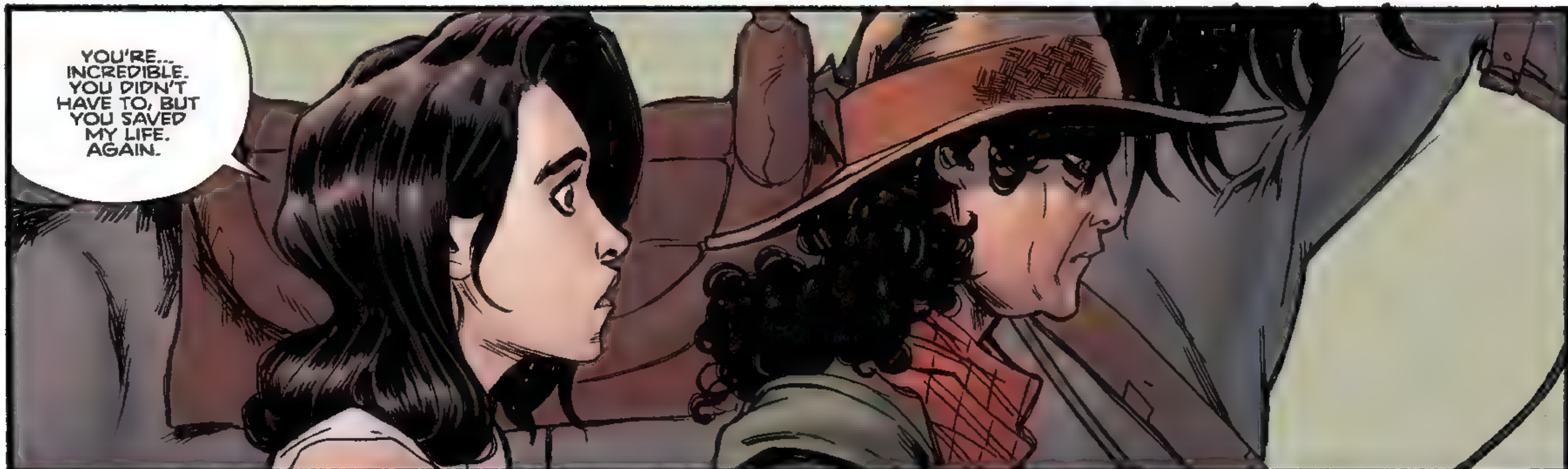
















THIS  
IS THE  
PLACE?

YES. BUT  
SOLDIERS ARE  
WATCHING. LET'S  
GET INSIDE. THAT  
LEECH ADDICT  
SAID TO ASK  
FOR SOMEONE  
NAMED...



...FEATHERS?

VEE  
CLOSED.  
YOU GO  
AWAY.



WE ARE  
LOOKING  
FOR A MAN  
NAMED  
**WESTIN**. DO  
YOU KNOW  
HIM?

NO  
VESTIN.  
GO AWAY  
NOW.

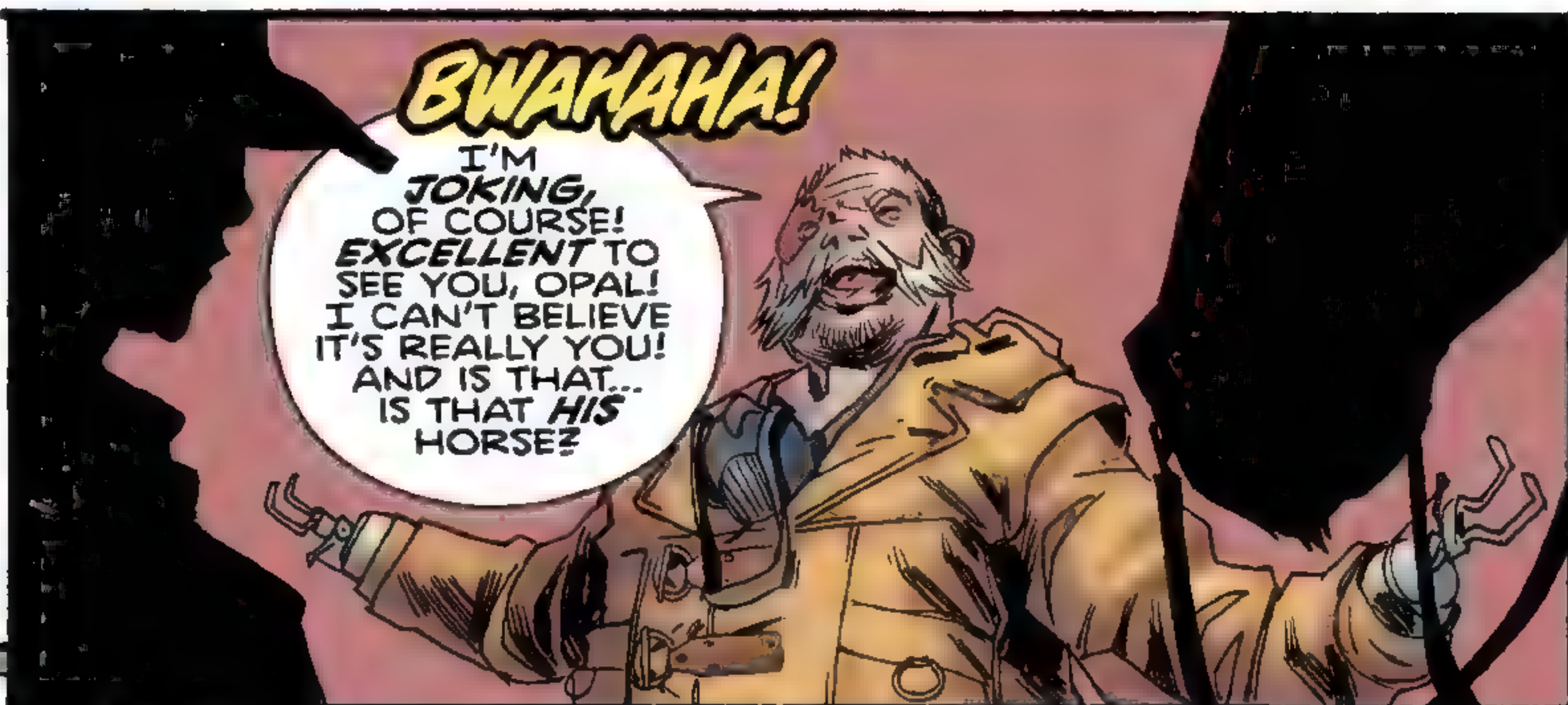
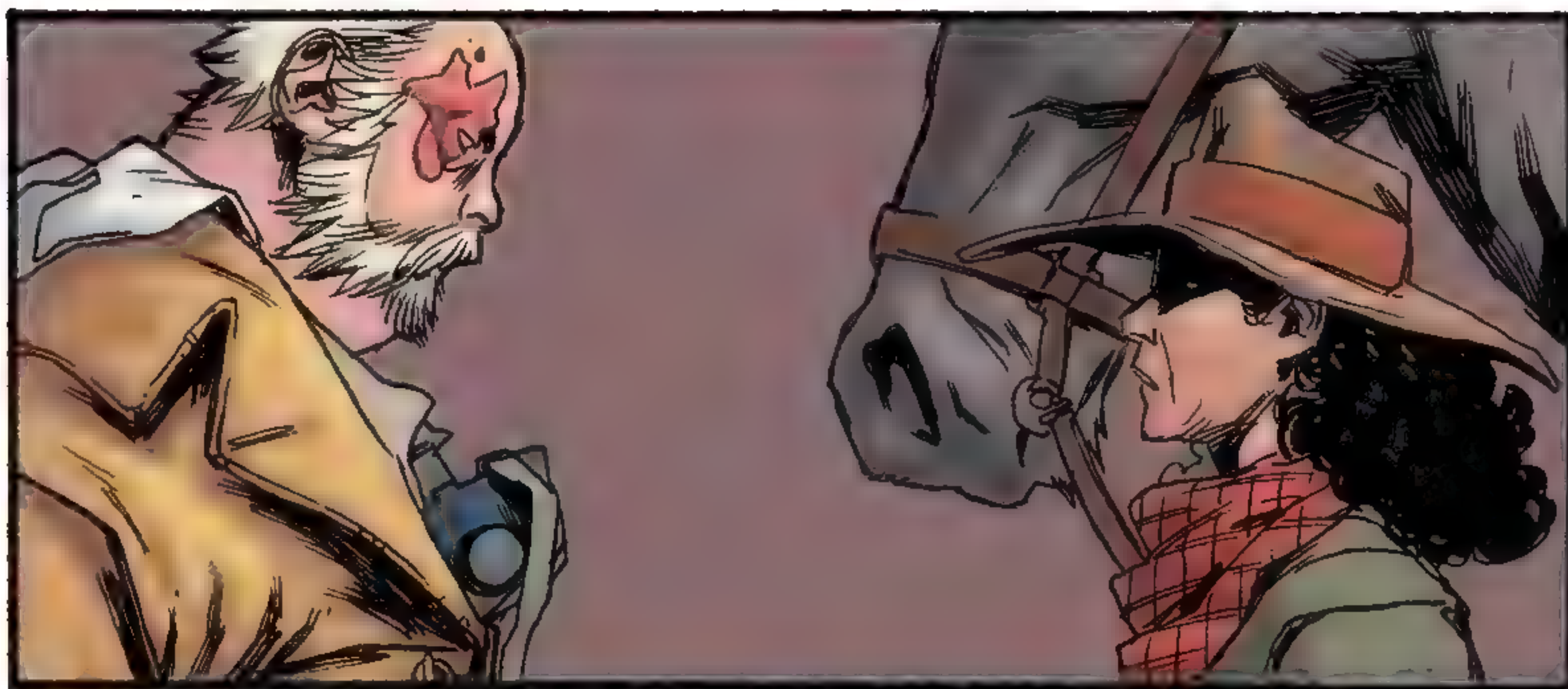


WHY  
DON'T YOU  
SEE IF HE'S  
HERE? I'M  
A VERY OLD  
FRIEND. HE  
WOULD BE  
HAPPY TO  
SEE ME.

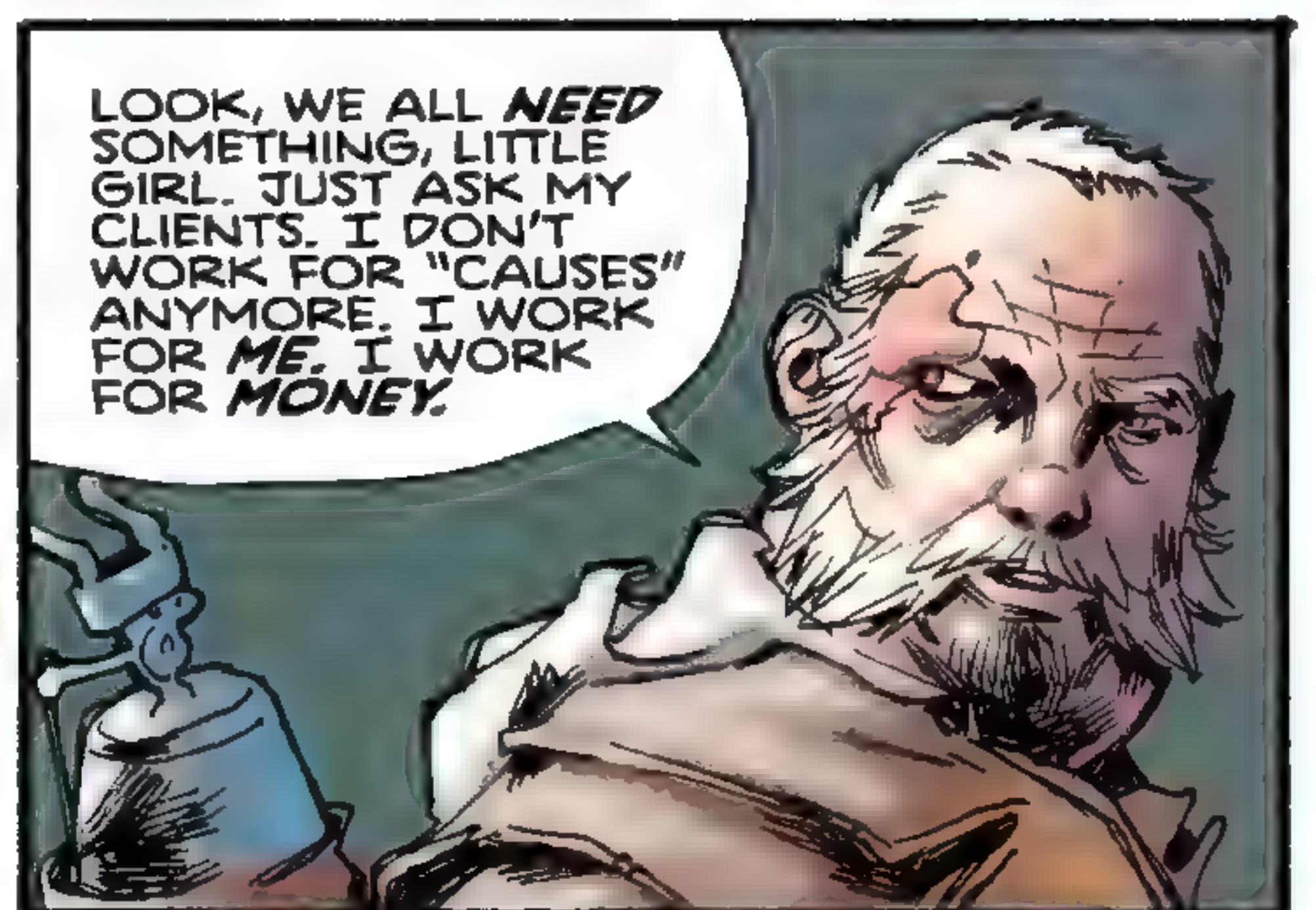
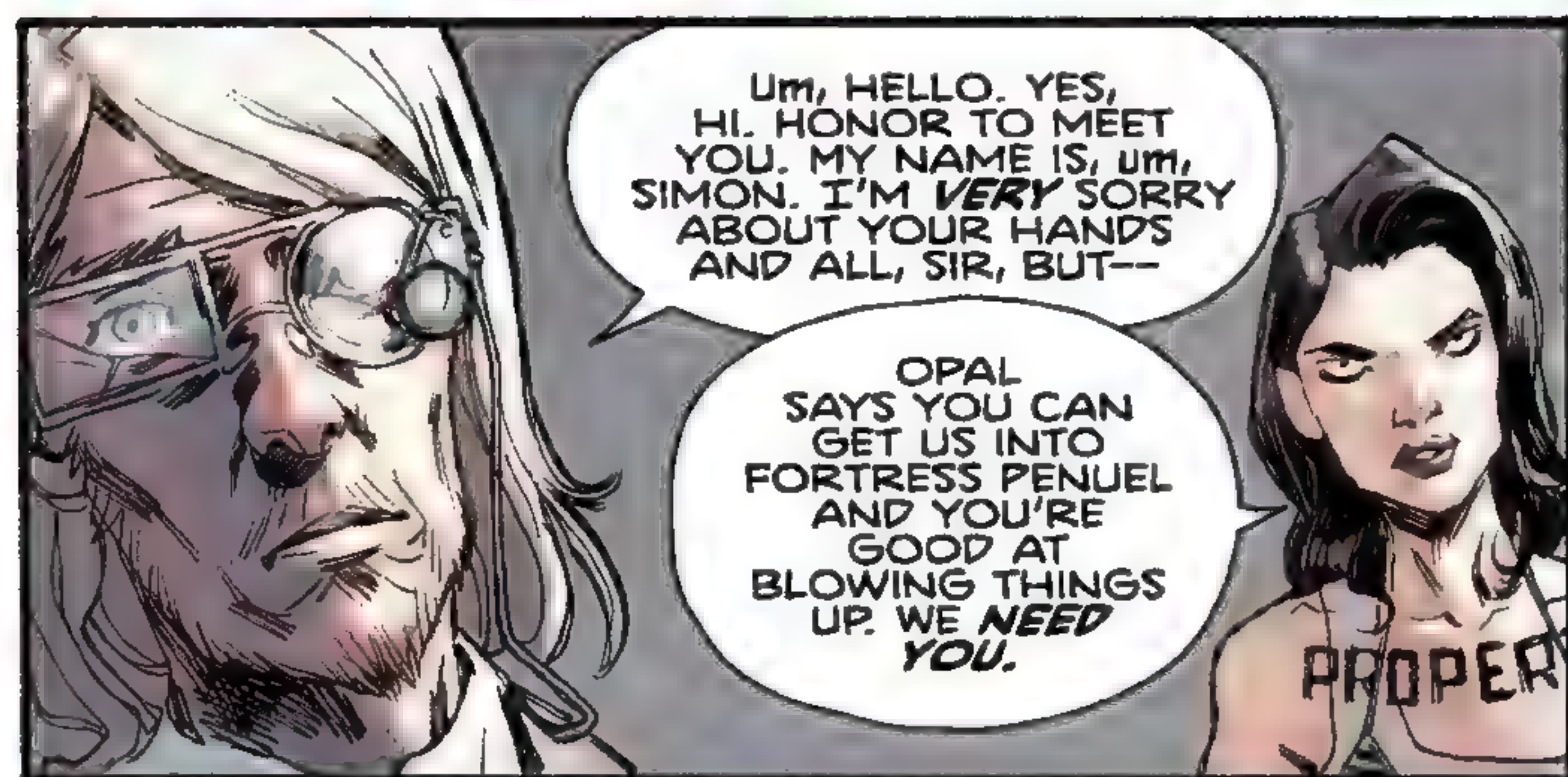


I  
WOULDN'T  
BE TOO  
SURE ABOUT  
THAT.

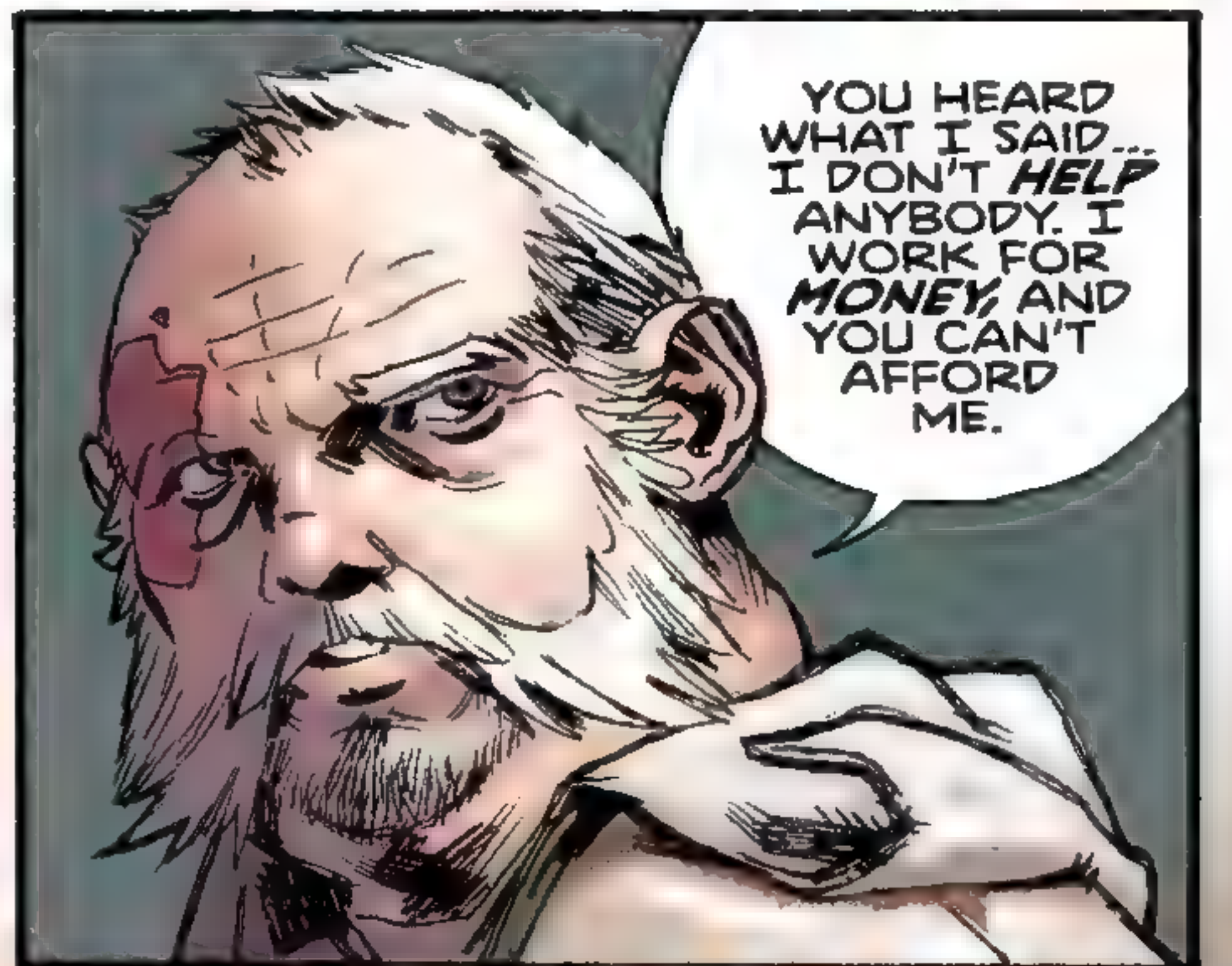
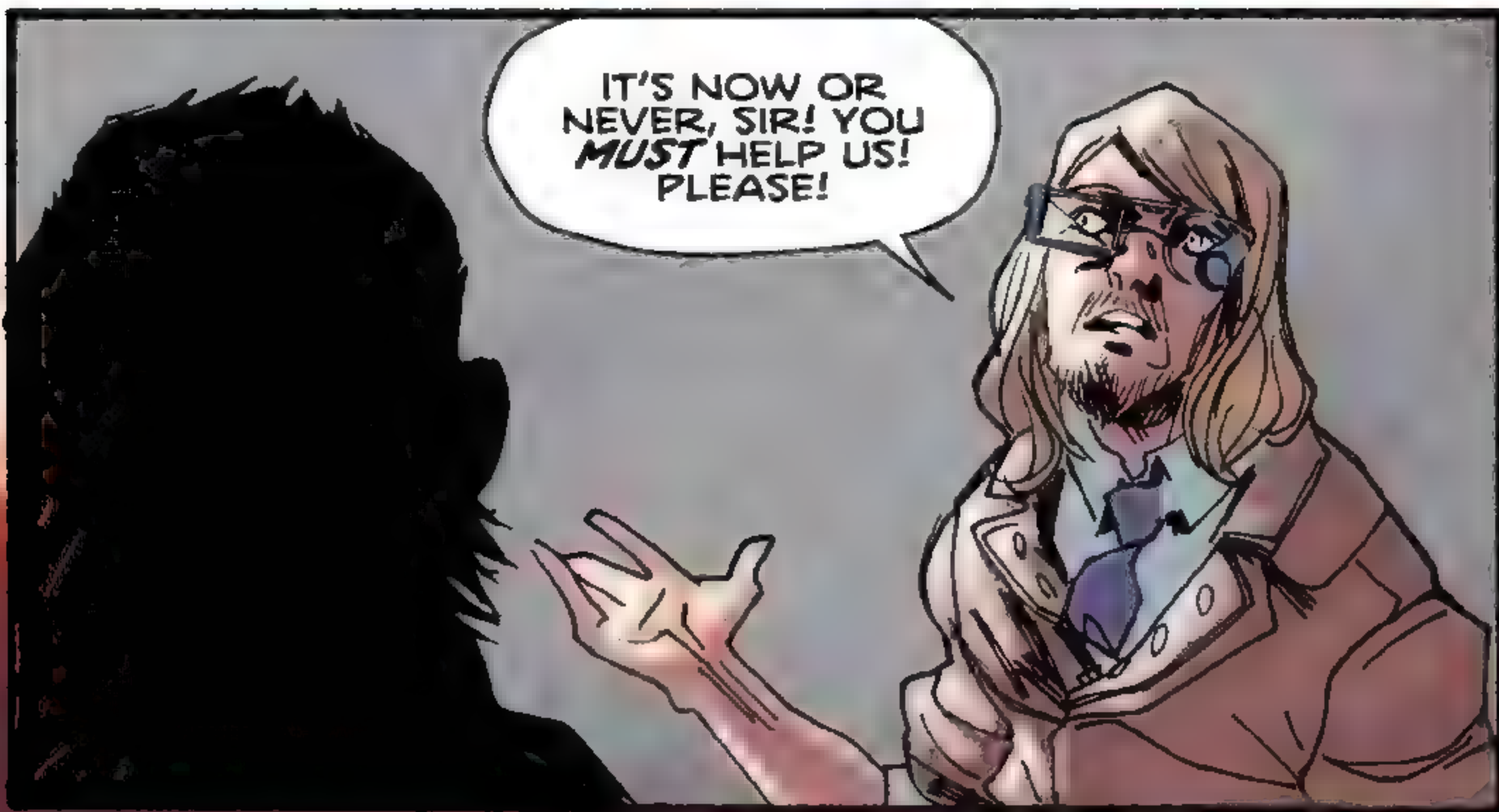










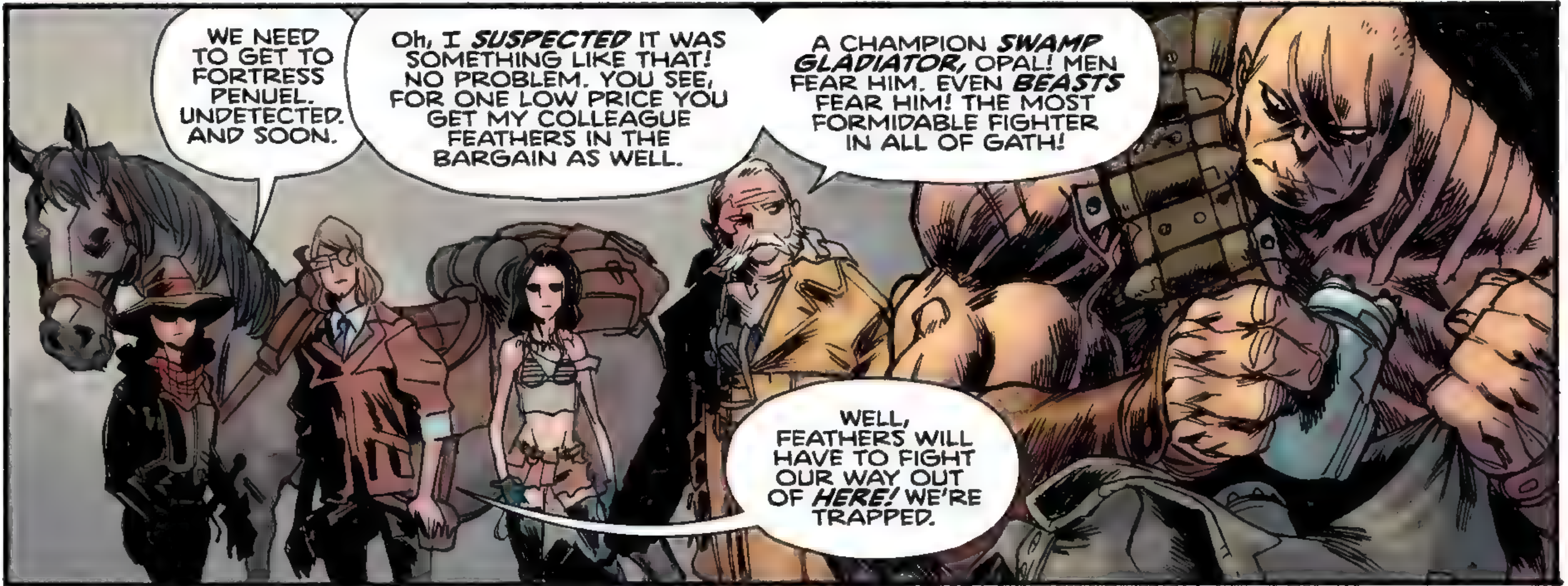






ZOLDIERS  
NO BODDER.

GOOD.  
THERE'S BEEN  
A CHANGE  
OF PLANS,  
FEATHERS!  
WE'RE LEAVING.  
BRING...  
EVERYTHING.

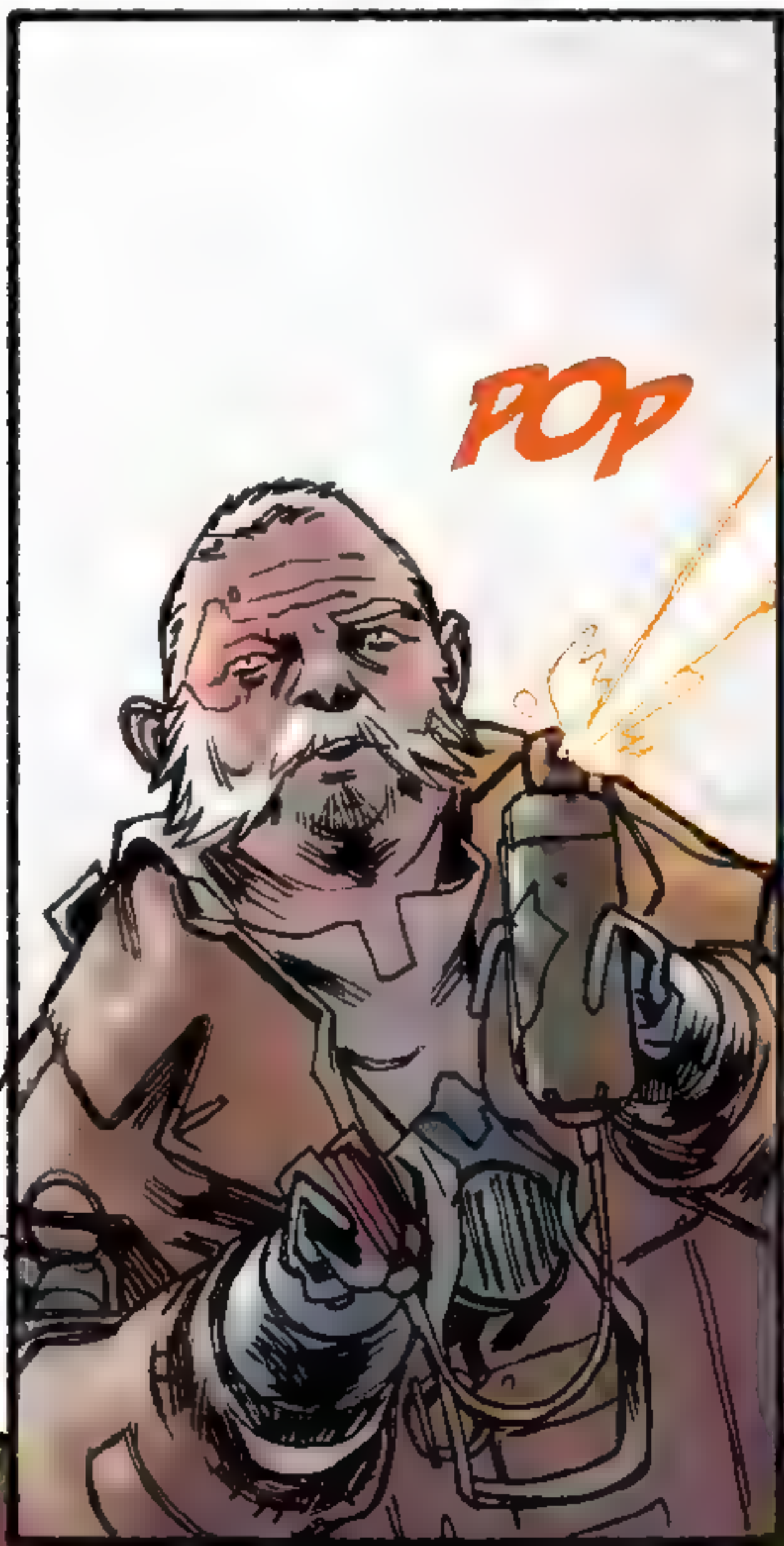


WE NEED  
TO GET TO  
FORTRESS  
PENUEL.  
UNDETECTED.  
AND SOON.

Oh, I *SUSPECTED* IT WAS  
SOMETHING LIKE THAT!  
NO PROBLEM. YOU SEE,  
FOR ONE LOW PRICE YOU  
GET MY COLLEAGUE  
FEATHERS IN THE  
BARGAIN AS WELL.

A CHAMPION *SWAMP*  
*GLADIATOR*, OPAL! MEN  
FEAR HIM. EVEN *BEASTS*  
FEAR HIM! THE MOST  
FORMIDABLE FIGHTER  
IN ALL OF GATH!

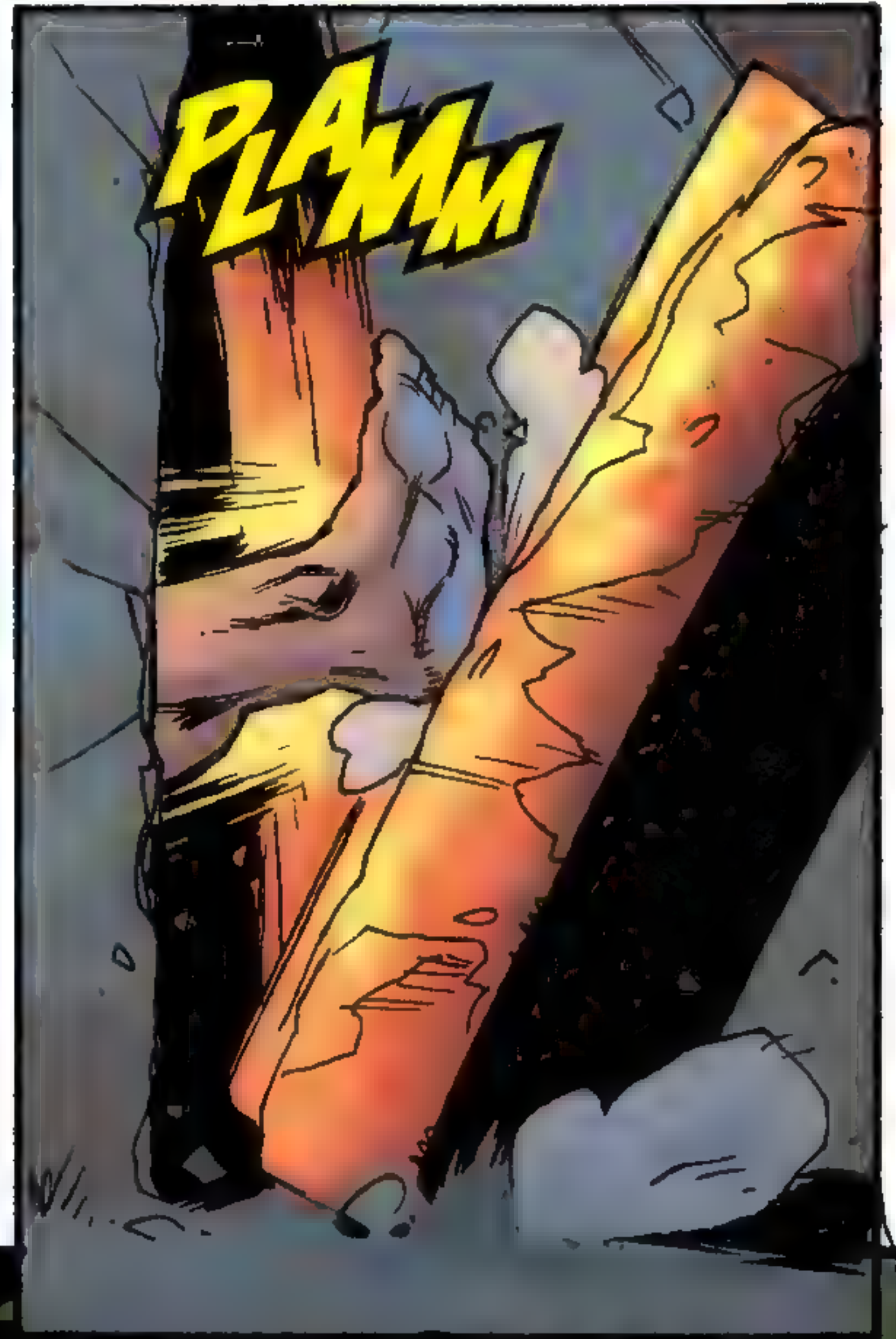
WELL,  
FEATHERS WILL  
HAVE TO FIGHT  
OUR WAY OUT  
OF *HERE!* WE'RE  
TRAPPED.



*POP*



NOT TO  
WORRY...



*PLAMM*



...FEATHERS  
AND I WILL  
GET YOU TO  
FORTRESS  
PENUEL.

*SHOOOSH*



**THE DUNGEONS OF  
FORTRESS PENUEL.**

I COUNTED  
EXACTLY FIFTY  
DEAD. BUT DEAD  
OR ALIVE, BRIDGE  
PEOPLE ALL LOOK  
THE SAME, DON'T  
YOU THINK?

AN INNATELY INFERIOR  
RACE, THE POOR. THE  
SHAPE OF THE HEAD.  
THE SET OF THE EYES.  
BORN TO SERVE  
THEIR BETTERS.

STILL, WAS  
IT HARD FOR YOU  
TO WATCH THEM DIE,  
ANZIO? INNOCENTS  
PERISHING BECAUSE  
YOU WITHHOLD  
INFORMATION?

I *TOLD* YOU, THERE  
*IS* NO SHADOW REBEL  
ARMY! NO TROOPS,  
NO SCOUTS, NO  
SYMPATHIZERS, NO  
ENCLAVE. IT'S...  
JUST...ME.

Pah! YOU  
FOOL! YOU  
ARE GOING  
TO *DIE* BY  
FIRING SQUAD  
IN A MATTER  
OF DAYS!  
HOW MANY  
BRIDGE PEOPLE  
WILL YOU  
NEEDLESSLY  
SACRIFICE IN  
THE MEANTIME?  
WHY...WON'T  
YOU...*TALK?*





YOU SEEM **NERVOUS**, GLETKIN. WHY? WHAT WILL YOUR MASTER DO TO YOU IF I **DON'T** TALK? HMM...? YOU'VE ALREADY BEEN DEMOTED TO TORTURER!



YOU SHUT YOUR...! WHEN TORTURE IS DONE TO EXTEND OR PRESERVE POWER IT IS A **GREAT DUTY** AND VIRTUE! AND... I **ENJOY** MY WORK, SCUM!

SOOO, IF YOU'RE LUCKY, PERHAPS JUST ANOTHER DEMOTION?



AND IF YOU'RE **NOT** LUCKY, PERHAPS SOMETHING...WORSE?

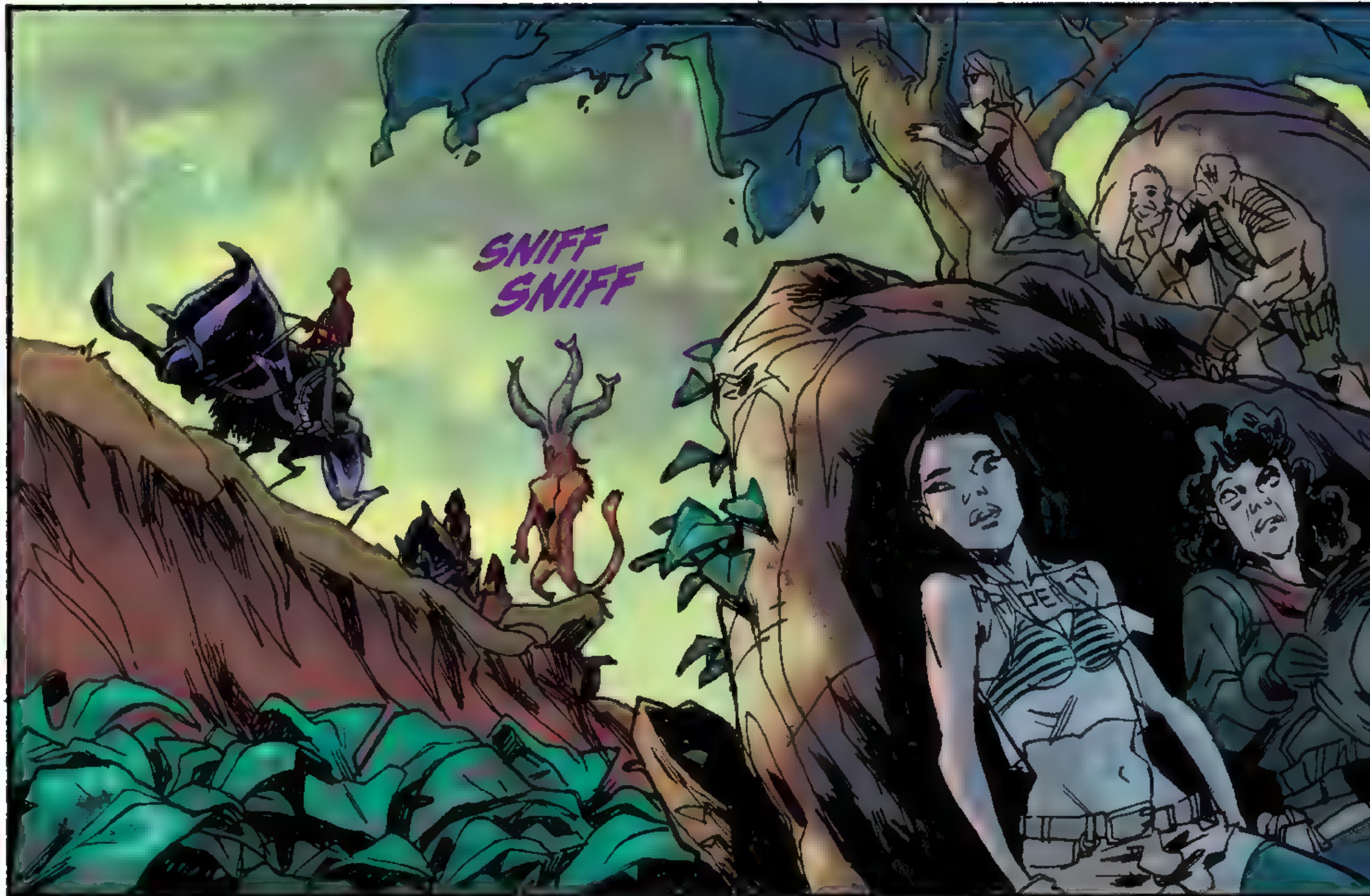
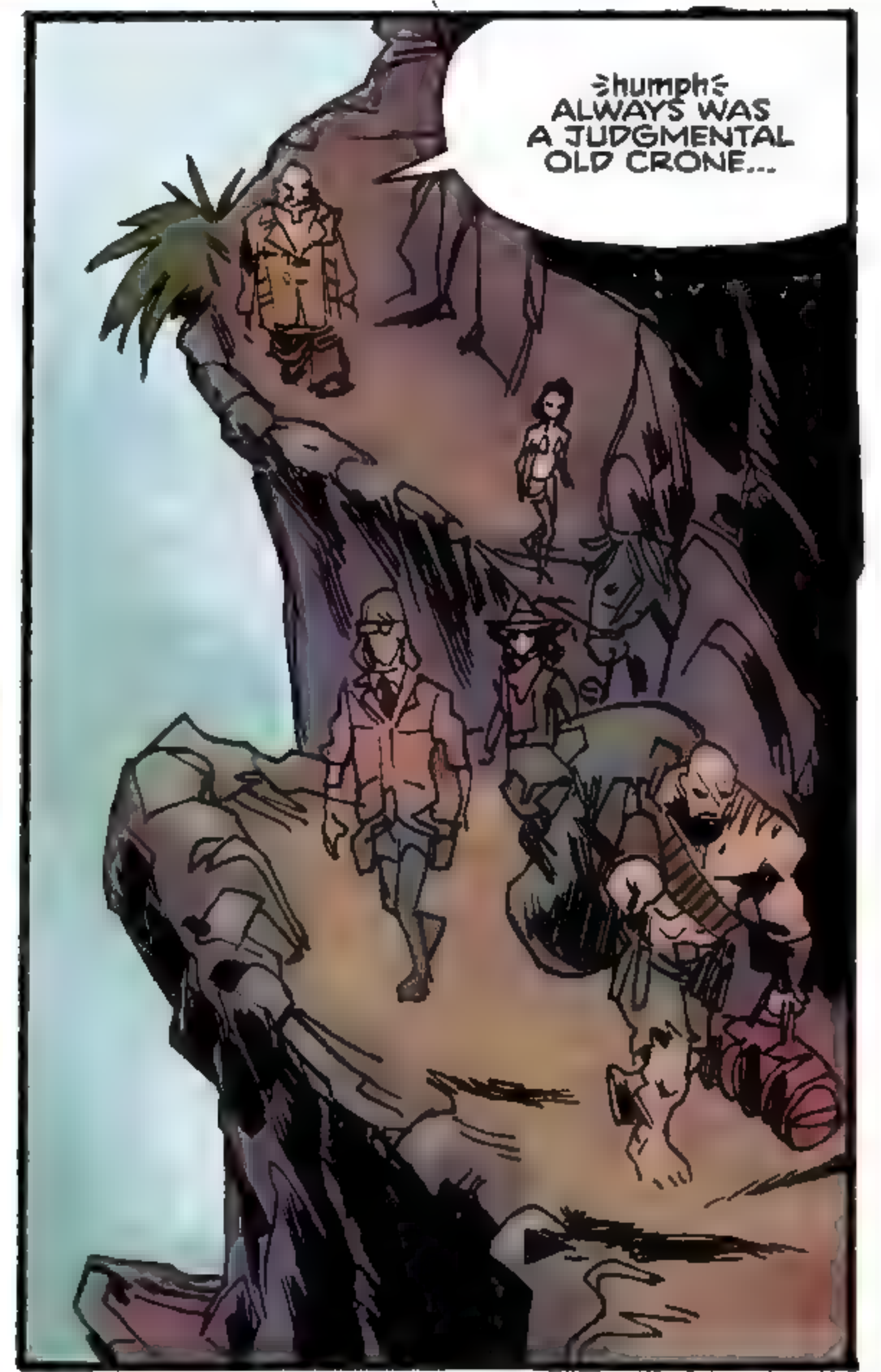


WHY, YOU...! YOU WILL BE BLOWN TO **BITS** ALL OVER STADIA PENUEL ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF YOUR BELOVED SAINT, GENERAL CHINA! THAT'S WHAT YOU... YOU...

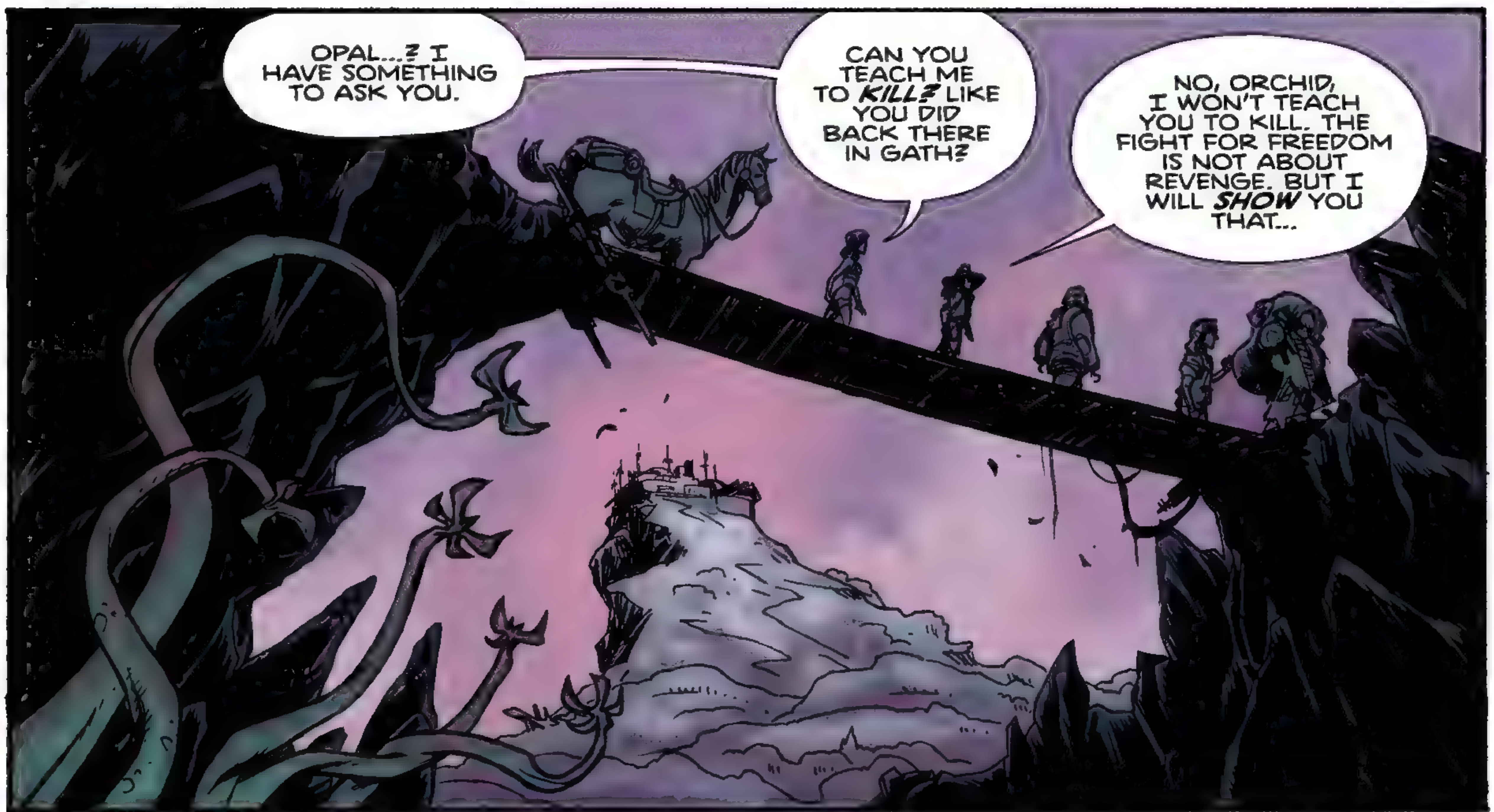


**GUARDS! BRING FIFTY MORE BRIDGE RATS! NOW! KILL THEM ONE...AT...A...TIME IN FRONT OF THE PRISONER!**









OPAL...? I HAVE SOMETHING TO ASK YOU.

CAN YOU TEACH ME TO *KILL* LIKE YOU DID BACK THERE IN GATH?

NO, ORCHID, I WON'T TEACH YOU TO KILL. THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM IS NOT ABOUT REVENGE. BUT I WILL *SHOW* YOU THAT...

"...NO AMOUNT OF ARMS CAN STOP A PEOPLE HUNGRY FOR BREAD AND THIRSTY FOR JUSTICE.

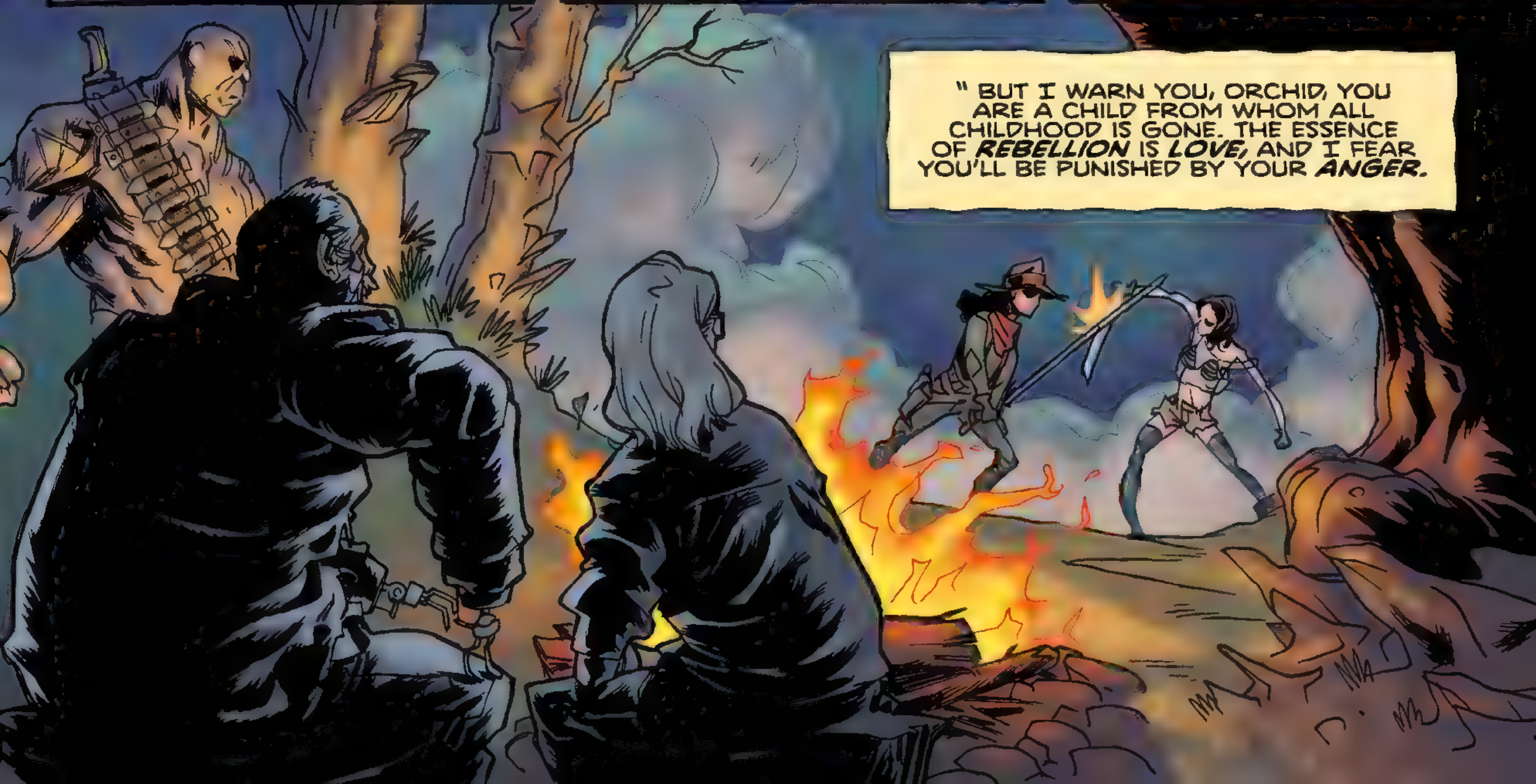


"THAT TO STIR THE OPPRESSED TO THE POINT OF GETTING OFF THEIR KNEES AND *TAKING* WHAT IS RIGHTFULLY THEIRS IS A *SACRED ACT*.



"THAT IN ORDER TO WIN A *WAR*, YOU MUST FIRST CONQUER *YOURSELF*.

" BUT I WARN YOU, ORCHID, YOU ARE A CHILD FROM WHOM ALL CHILDHOOD IS GONE. THE ESSENCE OF *REBELLION* IS *LOVE*, AND I FEAR YOU'LL BE PUNISHED BY YOUR *ANGER*.







"LOOK AROUND YOU.  
TIME ERODES ALL  
ACHIEVEMENTS. DEATH  
CUTS SHORT ALL PLANS.

"WE ARE  
STEWARDS OF  
**NOTHING** IN  
THE LONG RUN.  
NATURE EXISTS  
NEITHER FOR  
US, AND  
POSSESSES  
A STAYING  
POWER..."



AKK!

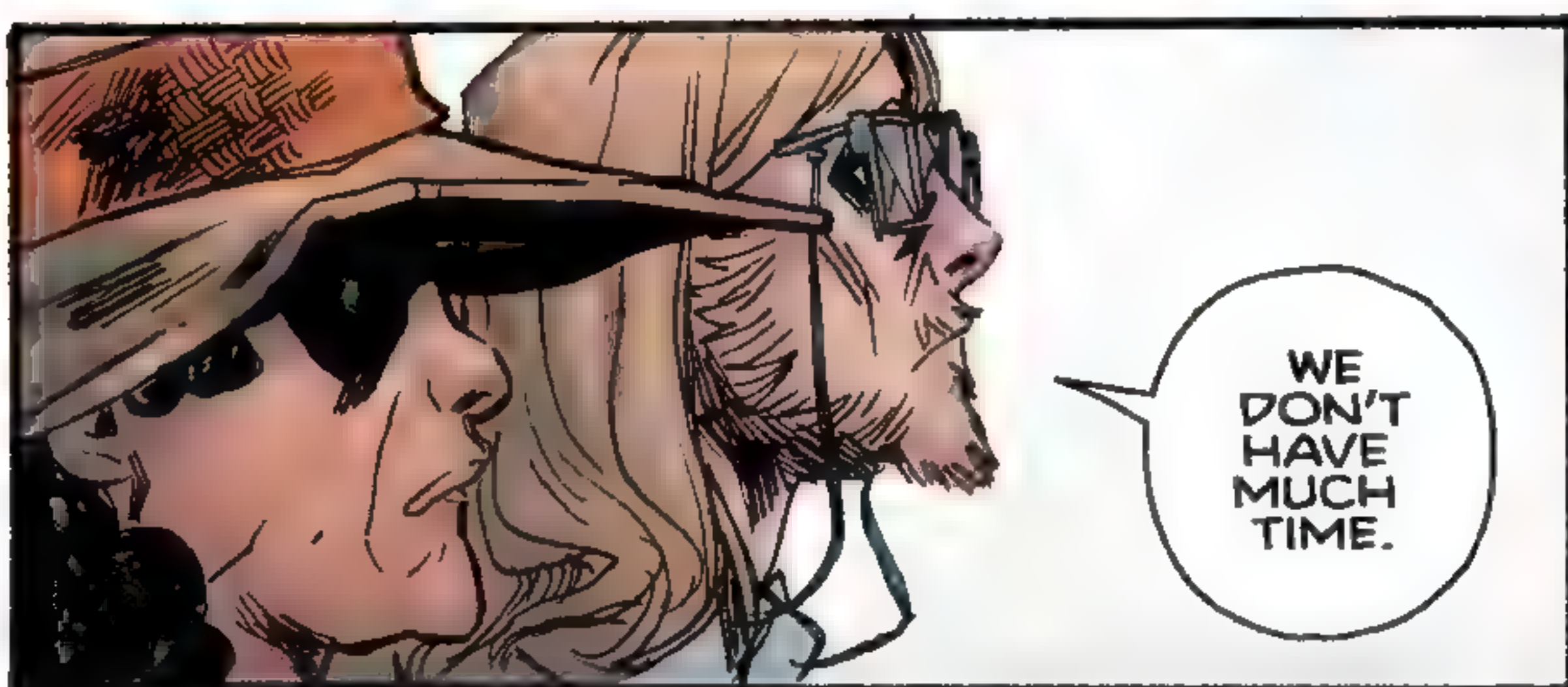
"...THAT MANKIND'S WORST  
FOLLY CANNOT THREATEN.



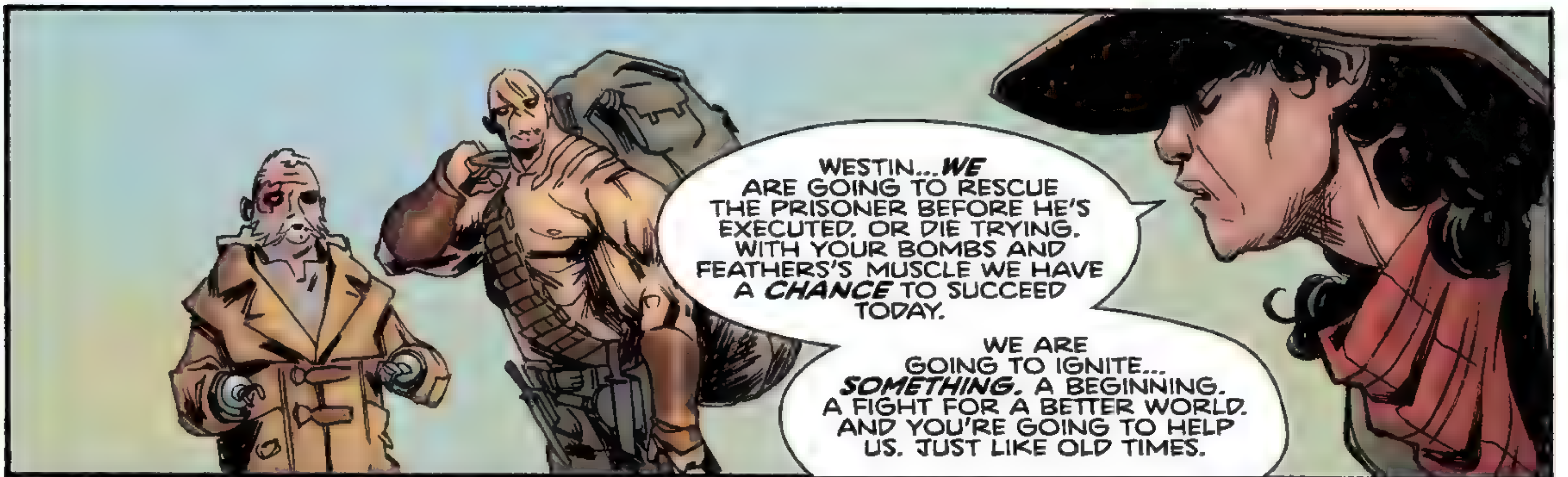
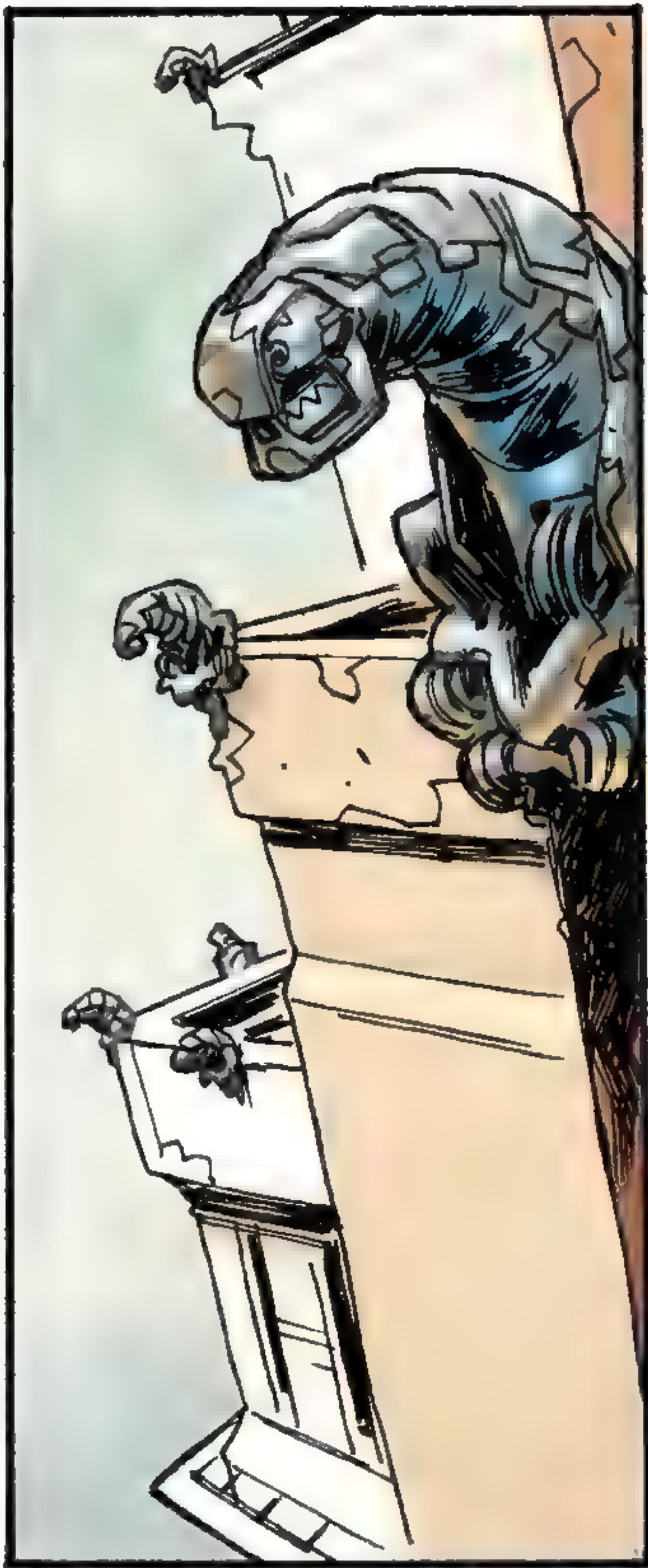
"ALL WE HAVE IS **NOW**. AND **RIGHT NOW** A NEW,  
BETTER WORLD **IS** POSSIBLE. A WORLD FREE OF  
SLAVERY AND EXPLOITATION. A WORLD WITHOUT  
TYRANTS OR TORTURE OR POVERTY. A WORLD  
OF EQUALITY, JUSTICE, AND FREEDOM.

"THERE ARE ONLY TWO MISTAKES  
YOU CAN MAKE ON THE ROAD TO  
THAT BETTER WORLD, ORCHID. NOT  
GOING ALL THE WAY..."

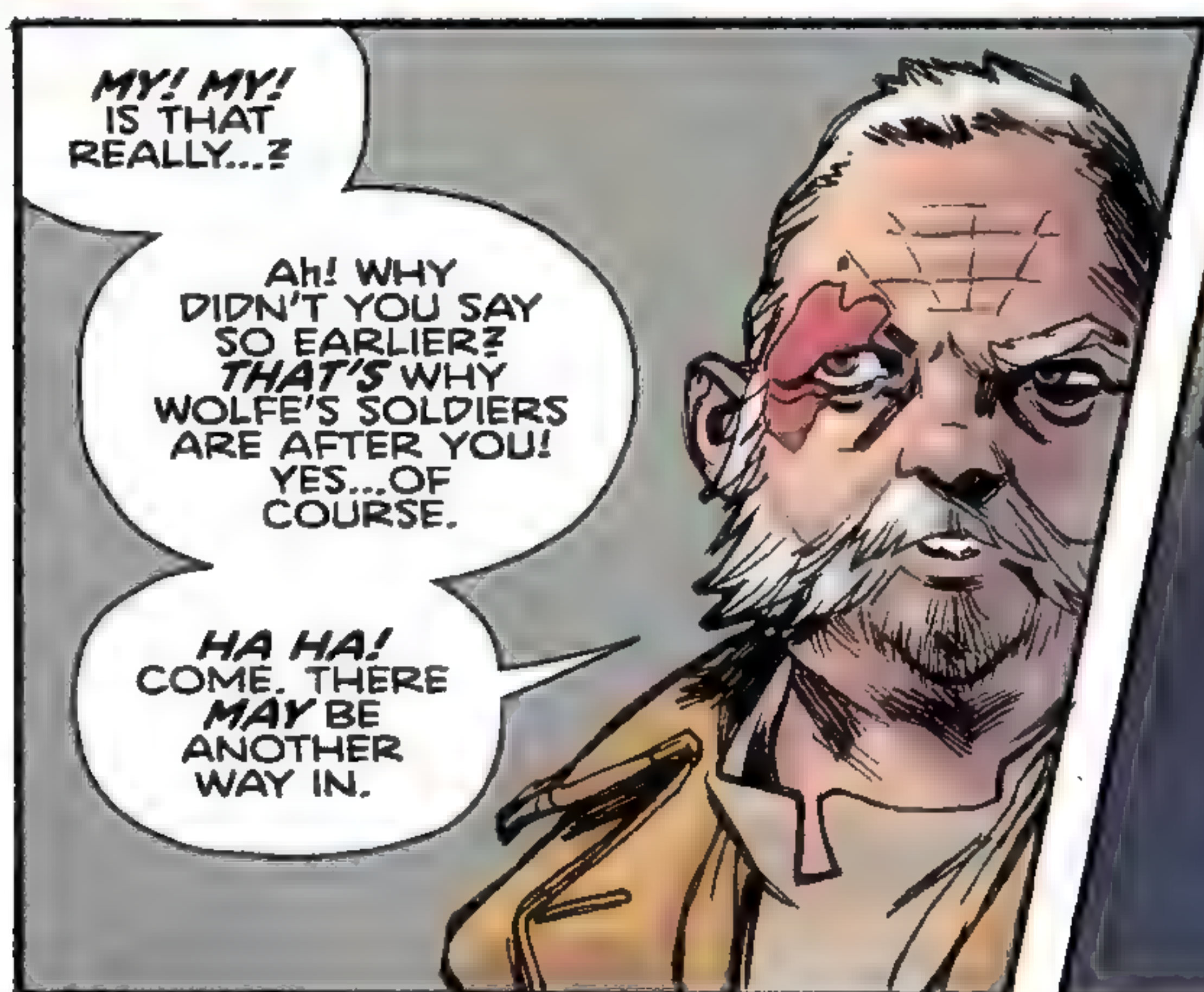
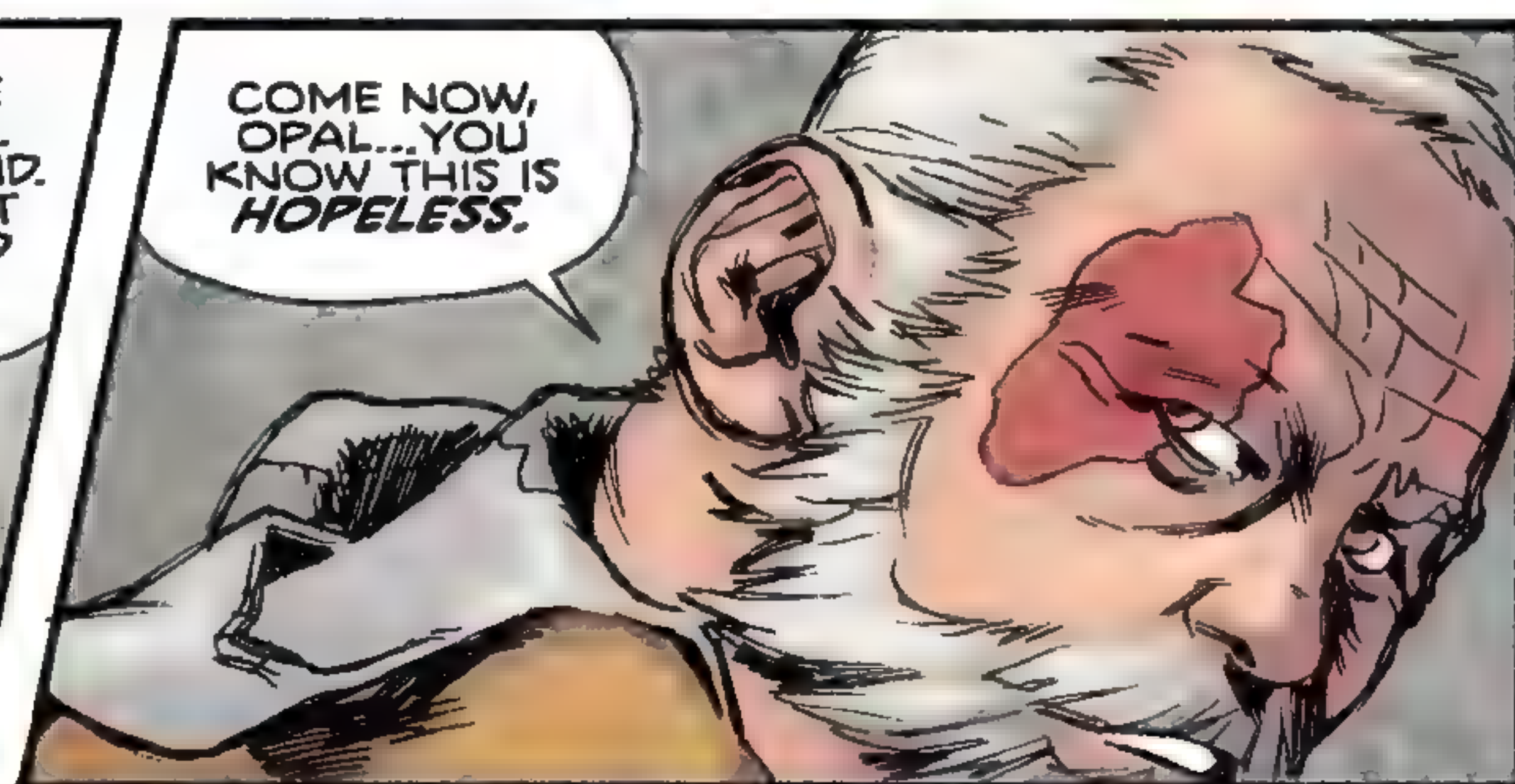
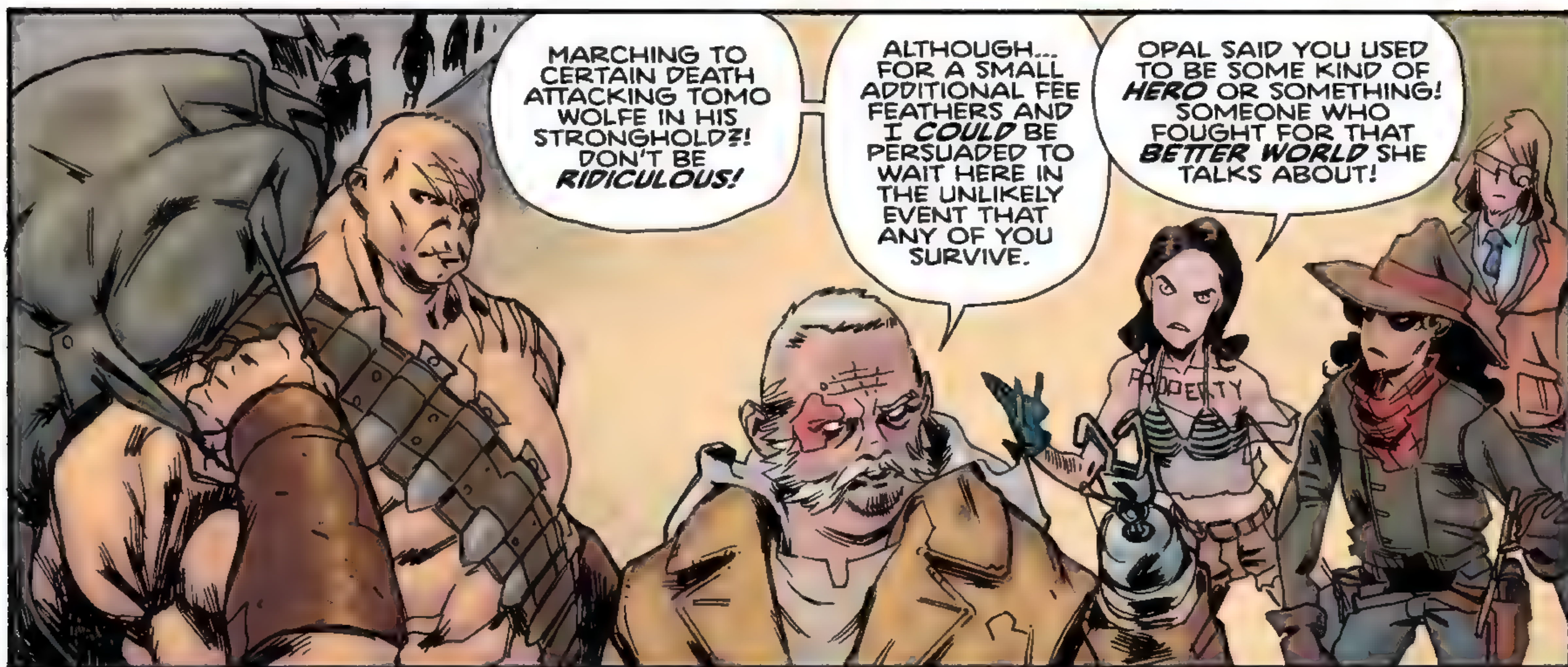




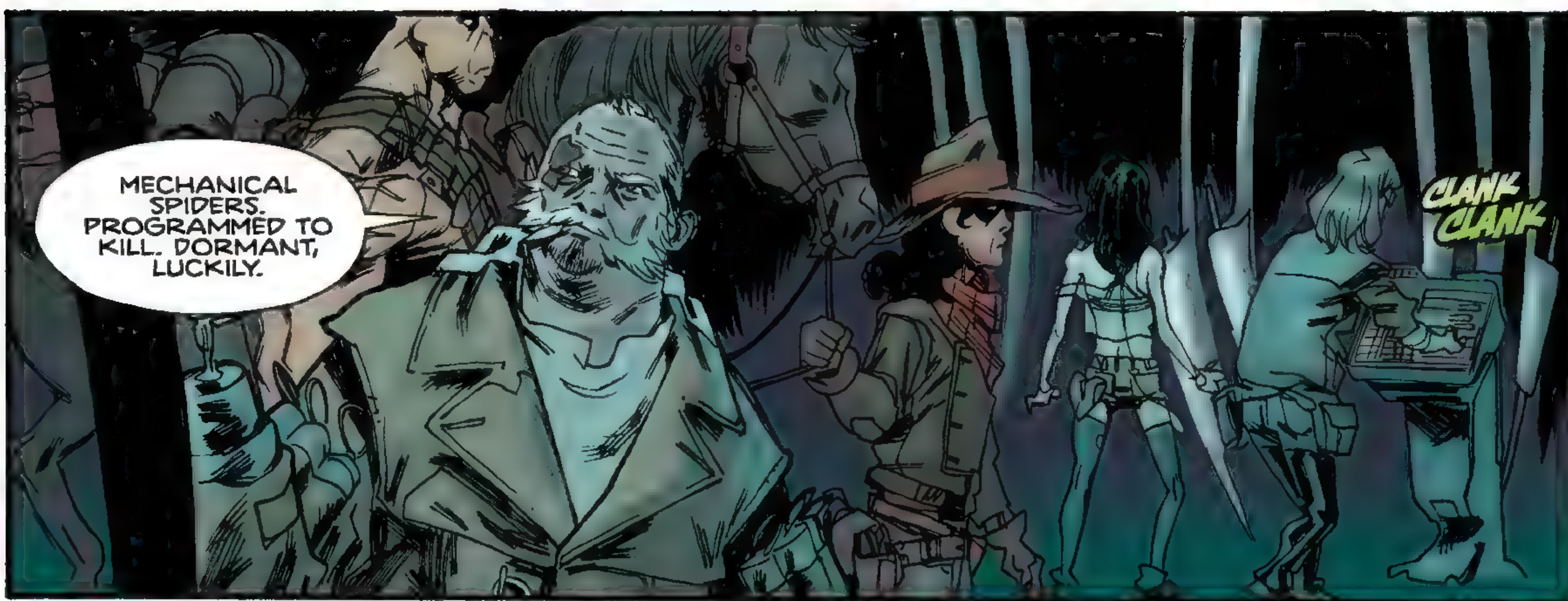
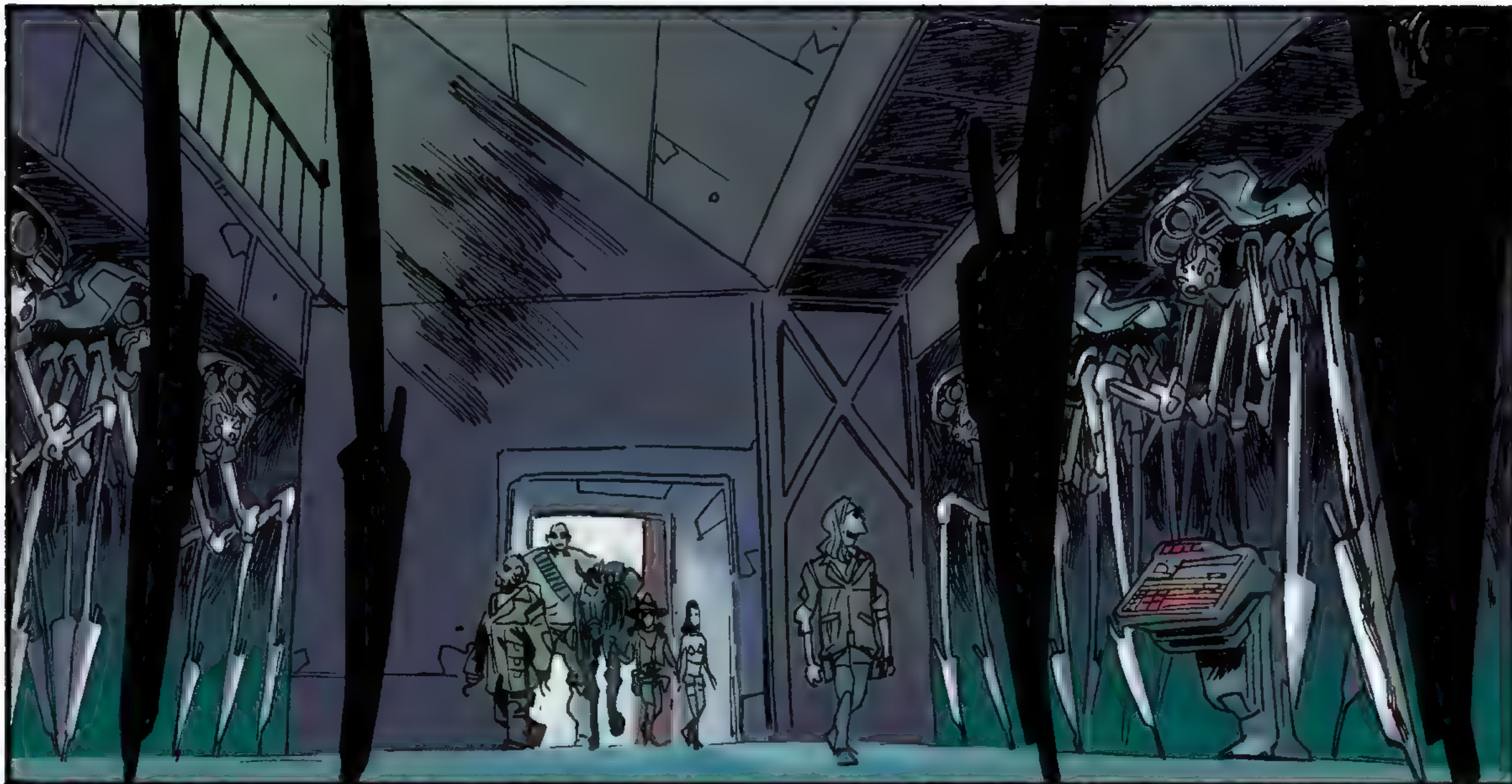




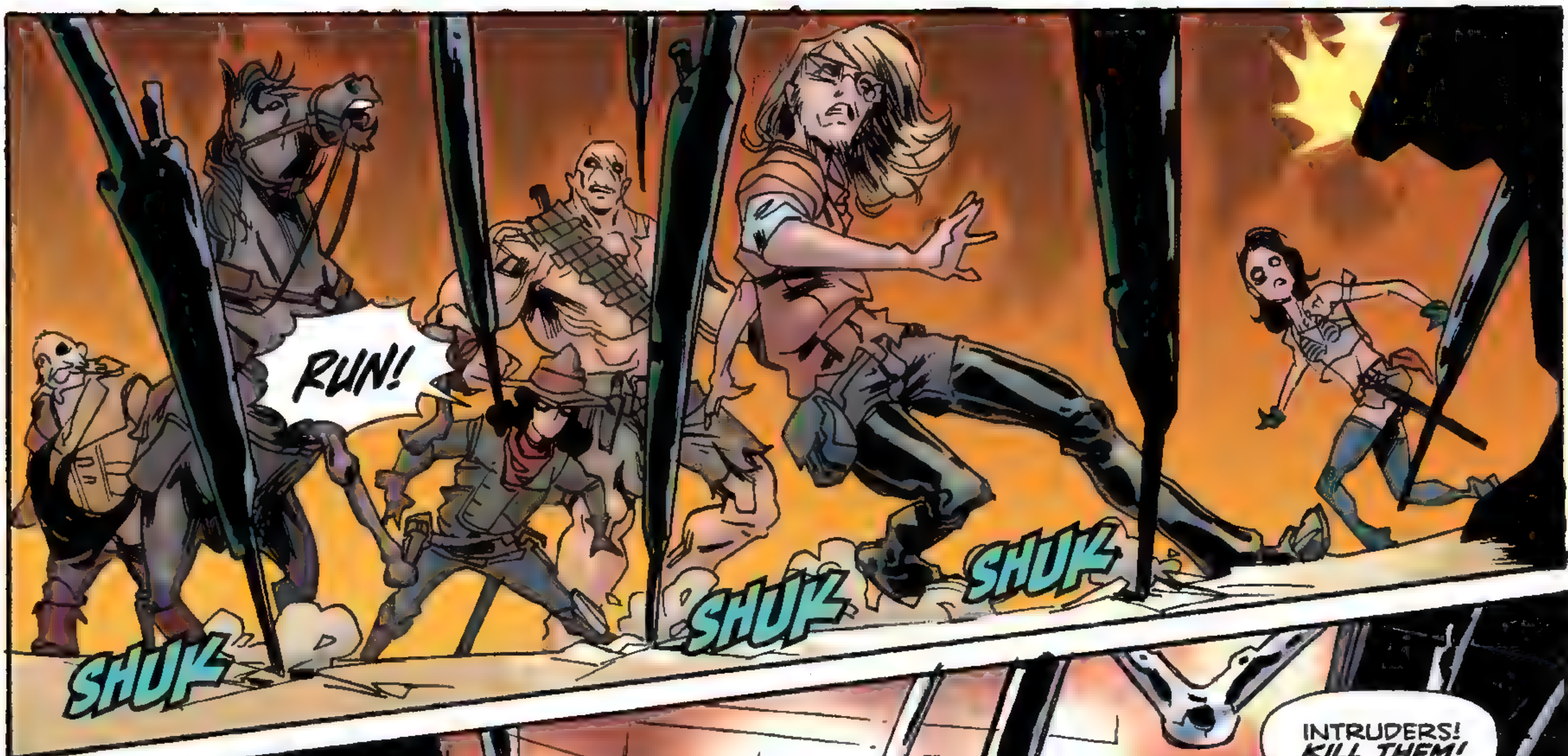




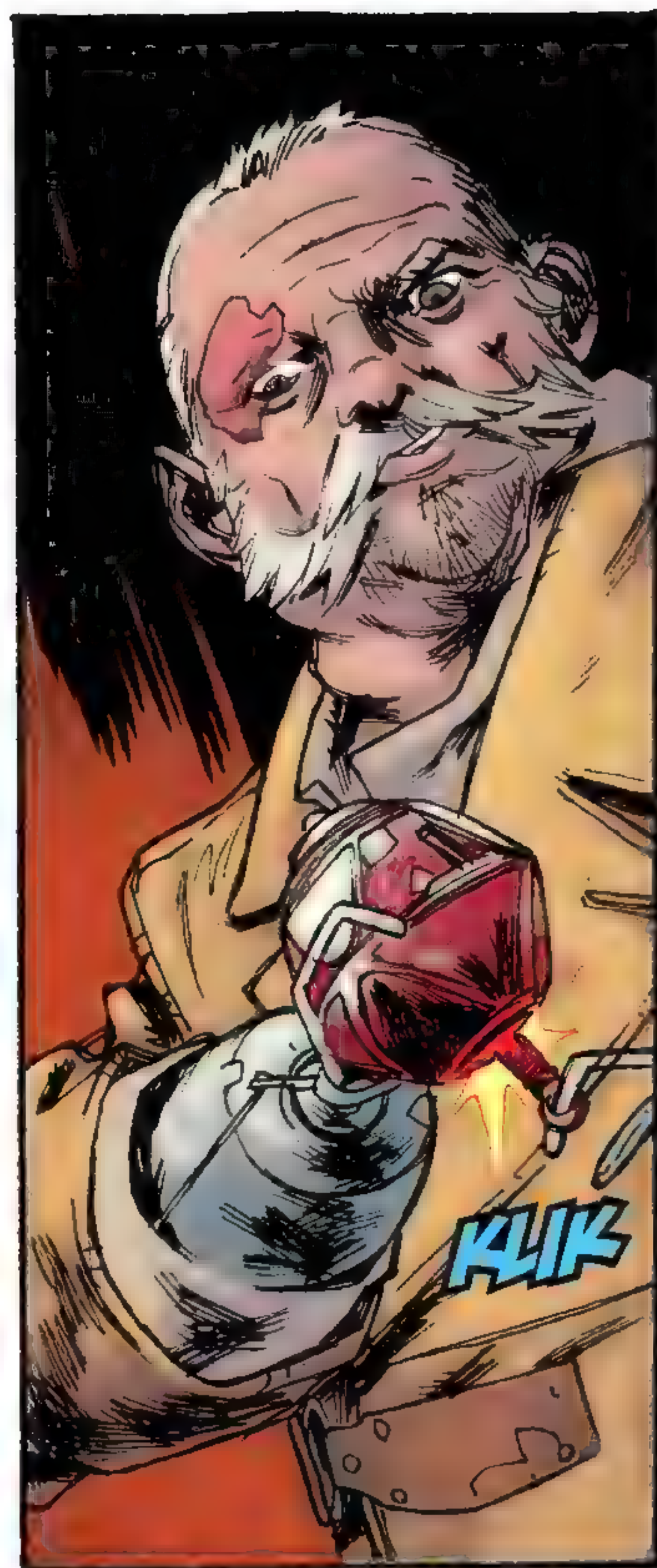




















Oh  
DEAR..













**STADIA PENUEL**

CITIZENS OF PENUEL! LOOK AROUND YOU! ARE WE NOT WELL FED WHILE OTHERS STARVE? ARE WE NOT SAFE WHILE OTHERS PERISH IN THE WILD? ARE WE NOT **CLEAN** AND **DRY** WHILE OTHERS SCROUNGE IN THE **WET** AND **FILTH**?

ARE WE NOT SERVED HAND AND FOOT WITH MERRY CHEER BY BRIDGE PEOPLE **LUCKY** ENOUGH TO FIND CONTENTMENT IN BONDAGE? AND ARE WE NOT PROTECTED BY THE BRAVEST AND MOST LETHAL FIGHTING FORCE THIS WORLD HAS EVER KNOWN?

TODAY, WE COMMEMORATE THE **EXTERMINATION** OF THE REBELLION AND CELEBRATE BRINGING TO **JUSTICE** ALL THOSE WHO HATE OUR FREEDOM AND THREATEN OUR WAY OF LIFE, OUR WEALTH, AND OUR PRIVILEGE!

TODAY IS **FINAL VICTORY DAY**, THE ANNIVERSARY OF GENERAL CHINA'S **DEATH!**

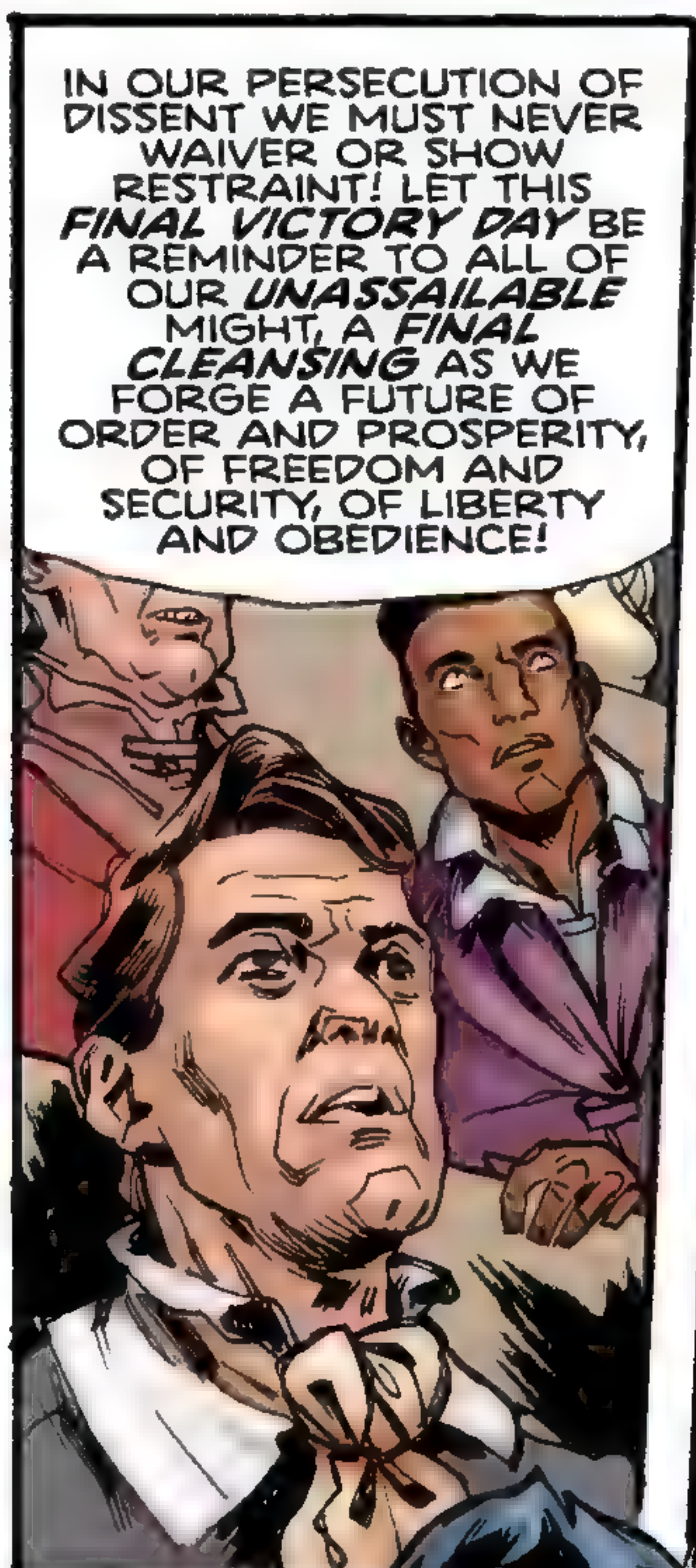






ON THIS DAY, LONG AGO, I **WATCHED** GENERAL CHINA DIE! THROUGH FORTITUDE AND SACRIFICE WE PREVAILED AGAINST THE TERRORISTS AND THEIR VILE AIMS!

THEY BELIEVED THEY COULD DESTROY OUR RESOLVE AND FORCE OUR RETREAT! WITH TODAY'S EXECUTION OF THIS MURDERING TERRORIST, WE REJOICE IN THEIR UTTER FAILURE!



IN OUR PERSECUTION OF DISSENT WE MUST NEVER WAIVER OR SHOW RESTRAINT! LET THIS **FINAL VICTORY DAY** BE A REMINDER TO ALL OF OUR **UNASSAILABLE** MIGHT, A **FINAL CLEANSING** AS WE FORGE A FUTURE OF ORDER AND PROSPERITY, OF FREEDOM AND SECURITY, OF LIBERTY AND OBEDIENCE!



WHEN THE BULLETS REND THIS REBEL'S FLESH WE WILL USHER IN A NEW ERA OF **POWER** AND **PLENTRY**! UNCHECKED AND UNCHALLENGED!



**NOW...THE MOMENT AT LAST! TAKE AIM, BRAVE SOLDIERS, LOYAL AND TRUE! UPON MY COMMAND...READY! AIM!**



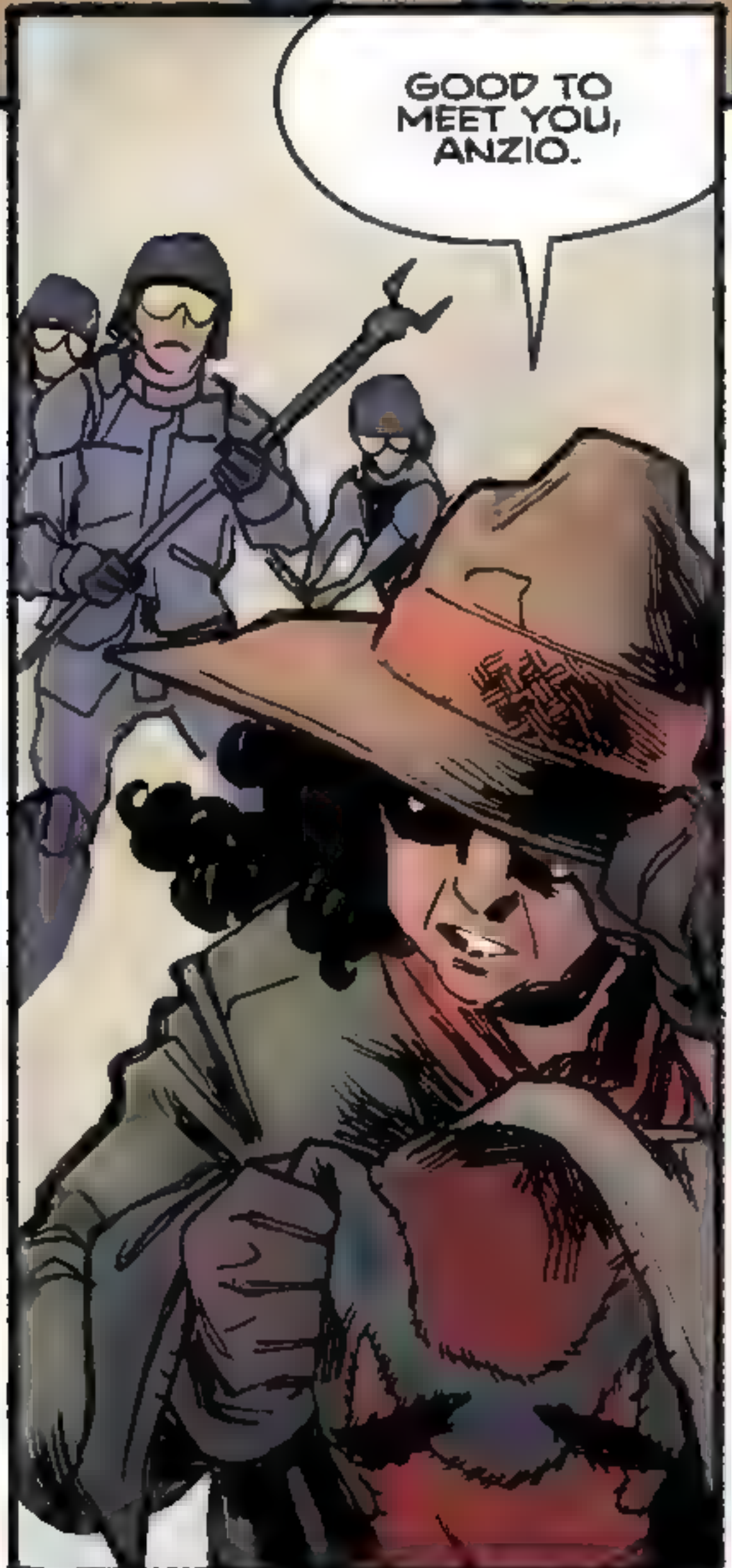
WHA...??















AHHH!

WHO...?

THAT  
LOOKS JUST  
LIKE...!

IT IS!

IT  
CAN'T  
BE!







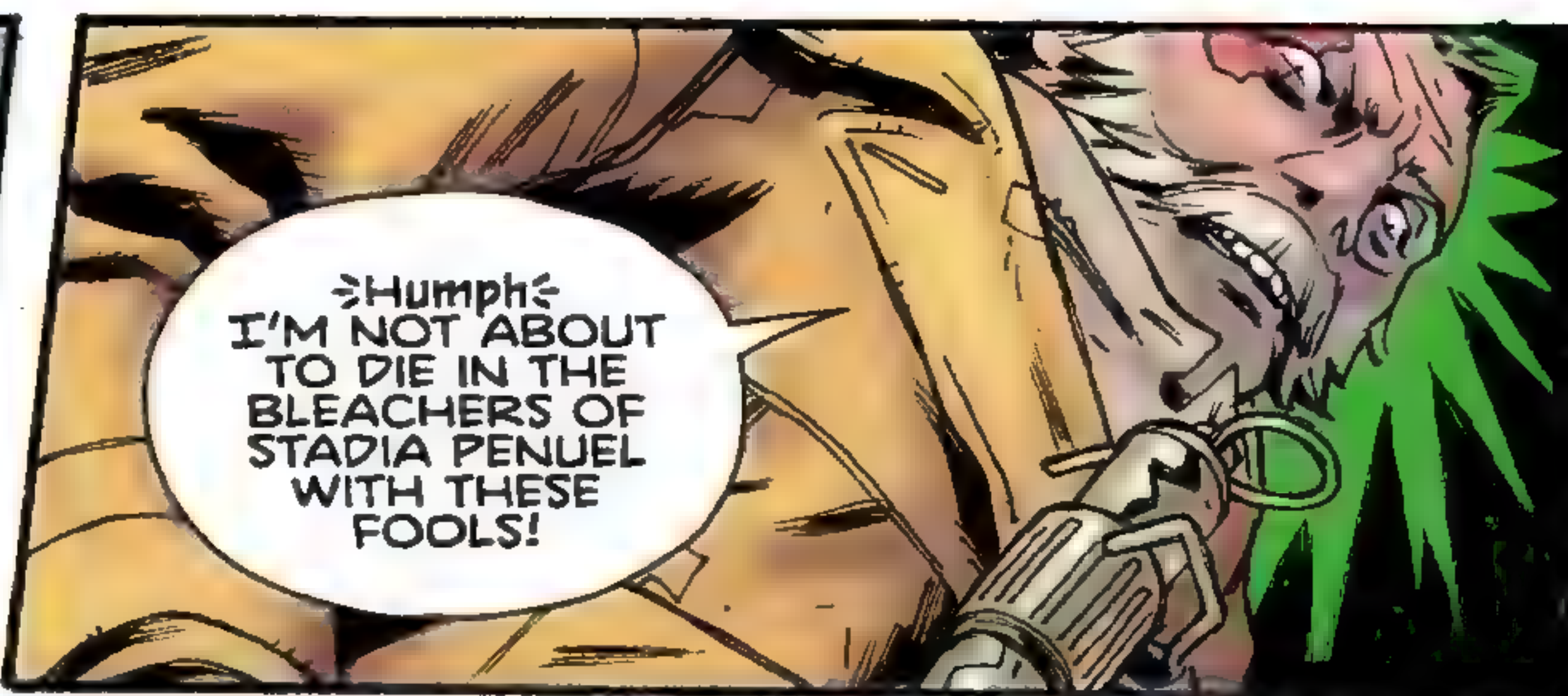






AHH!

RUN!!



Humph  
I'M NOT ABOUT  
TO DIE IN THE  
BLEACHERS OF  
STADIA PENUEL  
WITH THESE  
FOOLS!



FWOOSH



NOW WHAT DO  
WE DO? WE'RE  
TRAPPED!

GRAB THOSE  
CABLES AND  
GET OVER  
THE SIDE!  
NOW!

HURRY!  
I'LL HOLD  
THEM  
BACK...

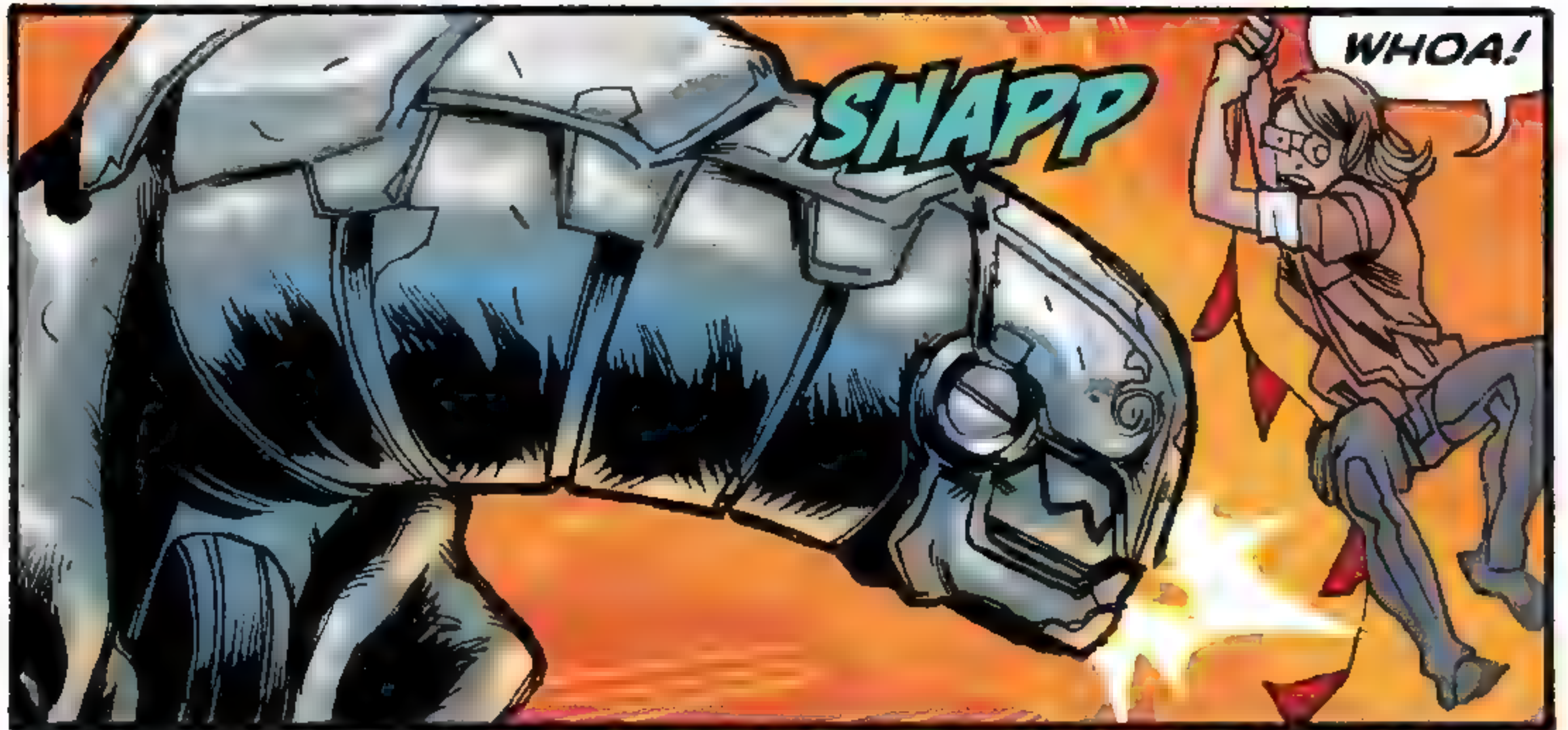
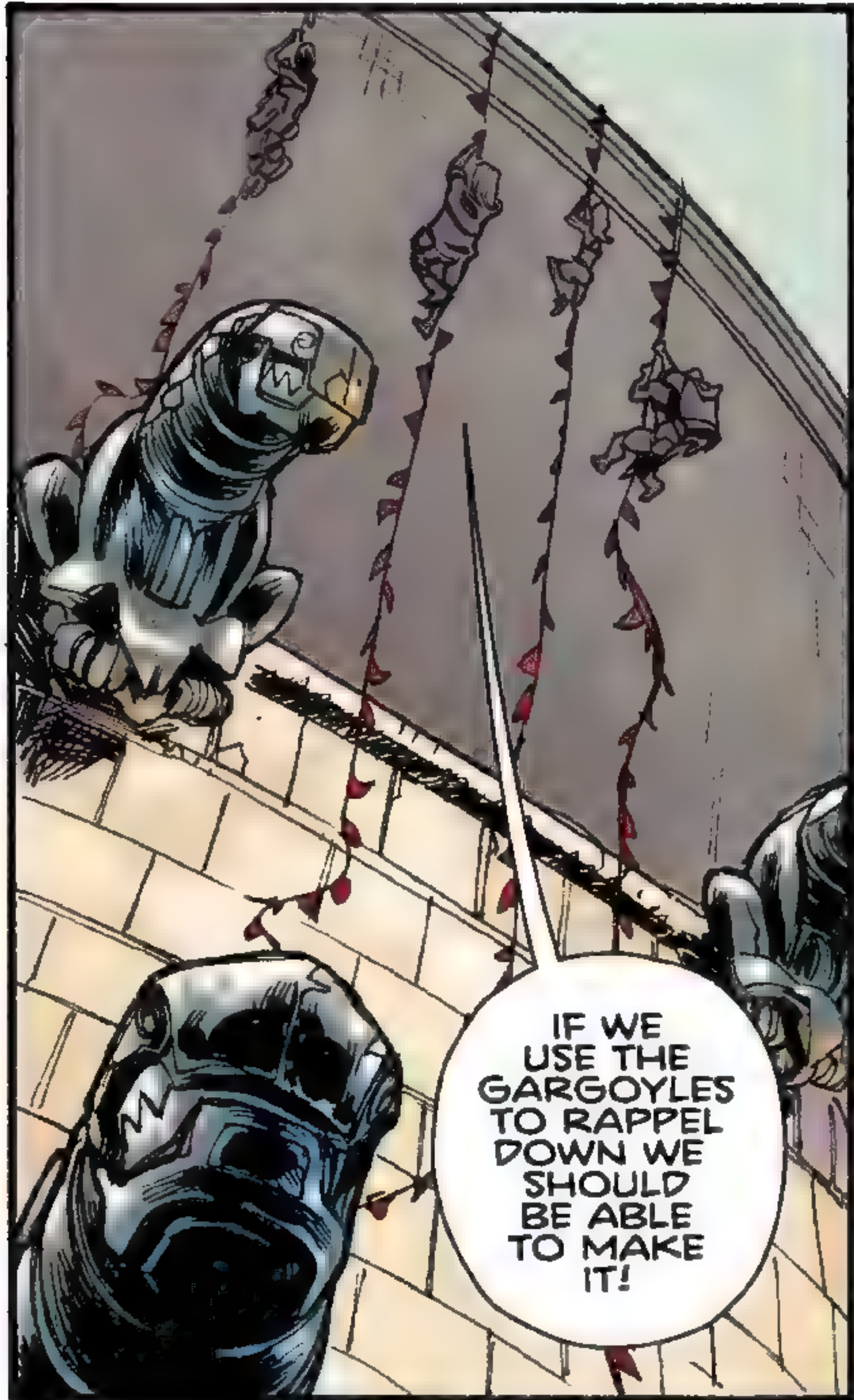


I'LL  
STAY HERE  
WITH YOU,  
OPAL.

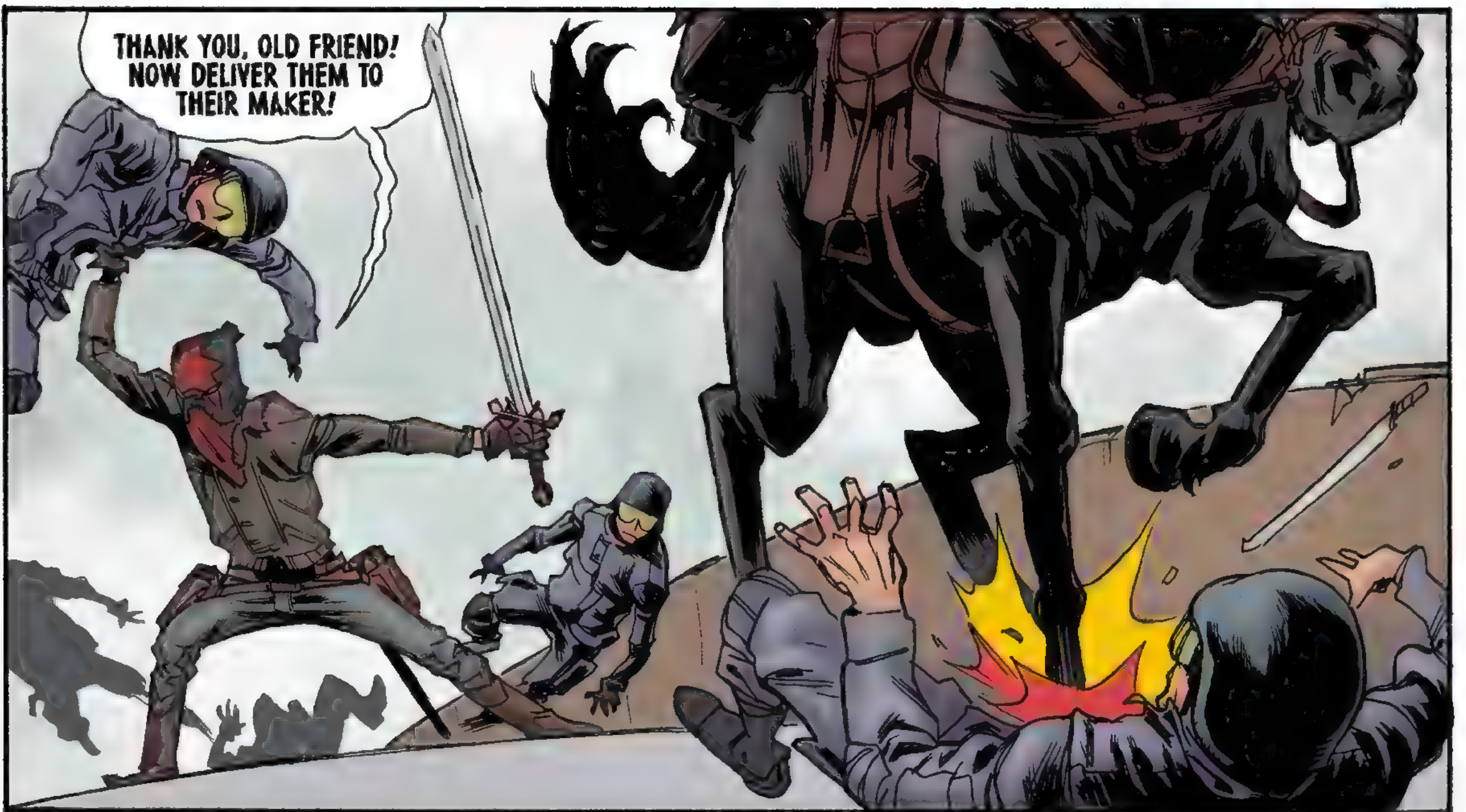
NO! GO, NOW!  
THEY'RE ALMOST  
HERE...

ALL THIS  
TO RESCUE YOU,  
ANZIO? YOU  
CERTAINLY DON'T  
LOOK WORTH  
THE EFFORT.









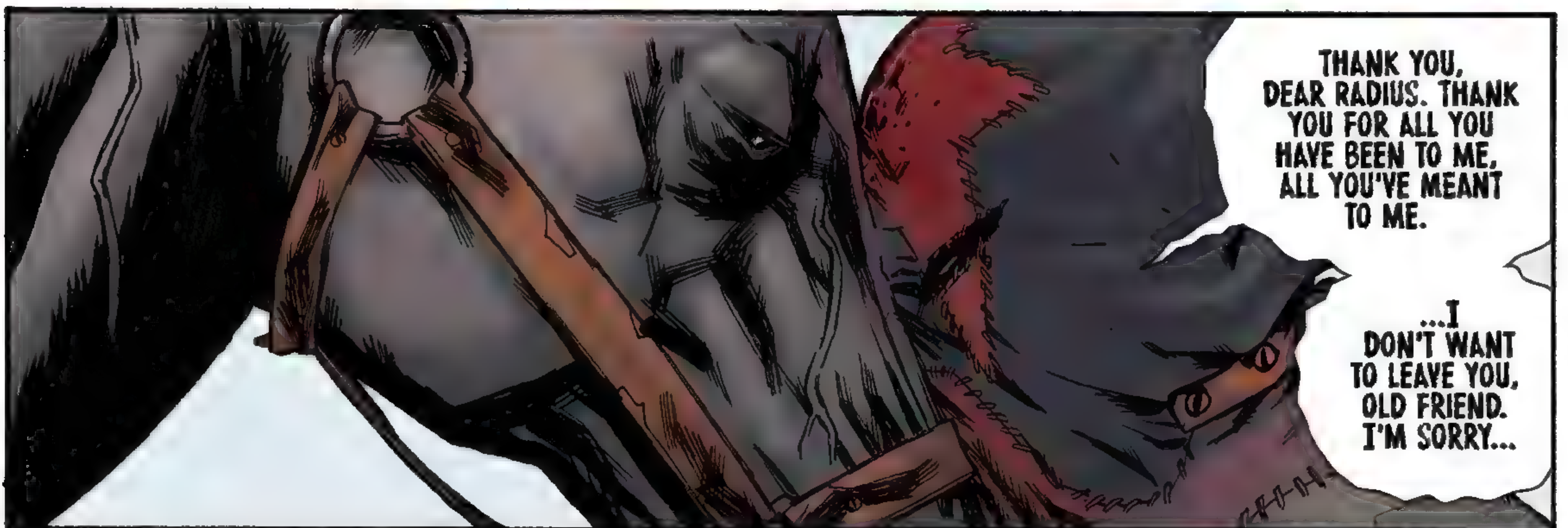
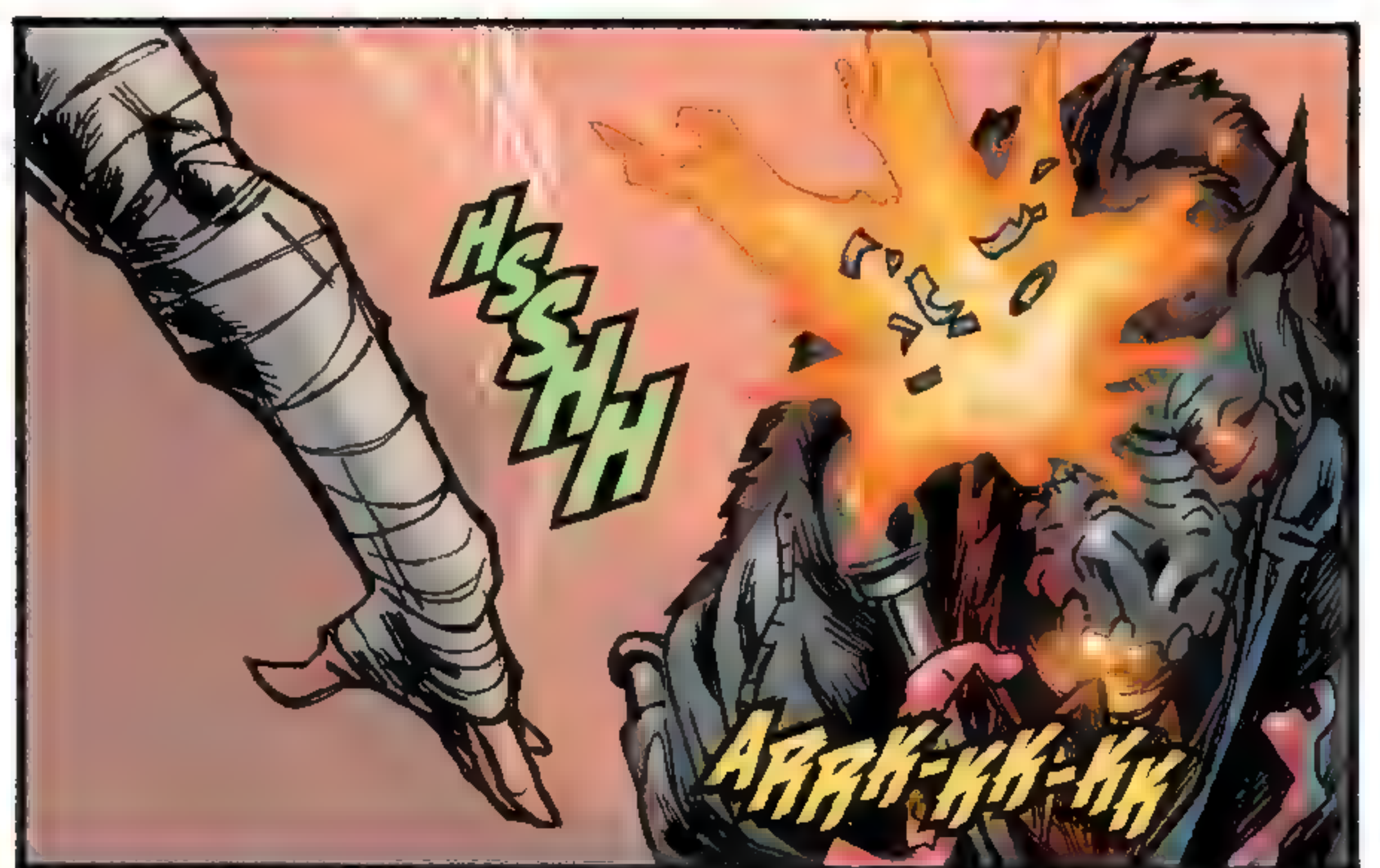
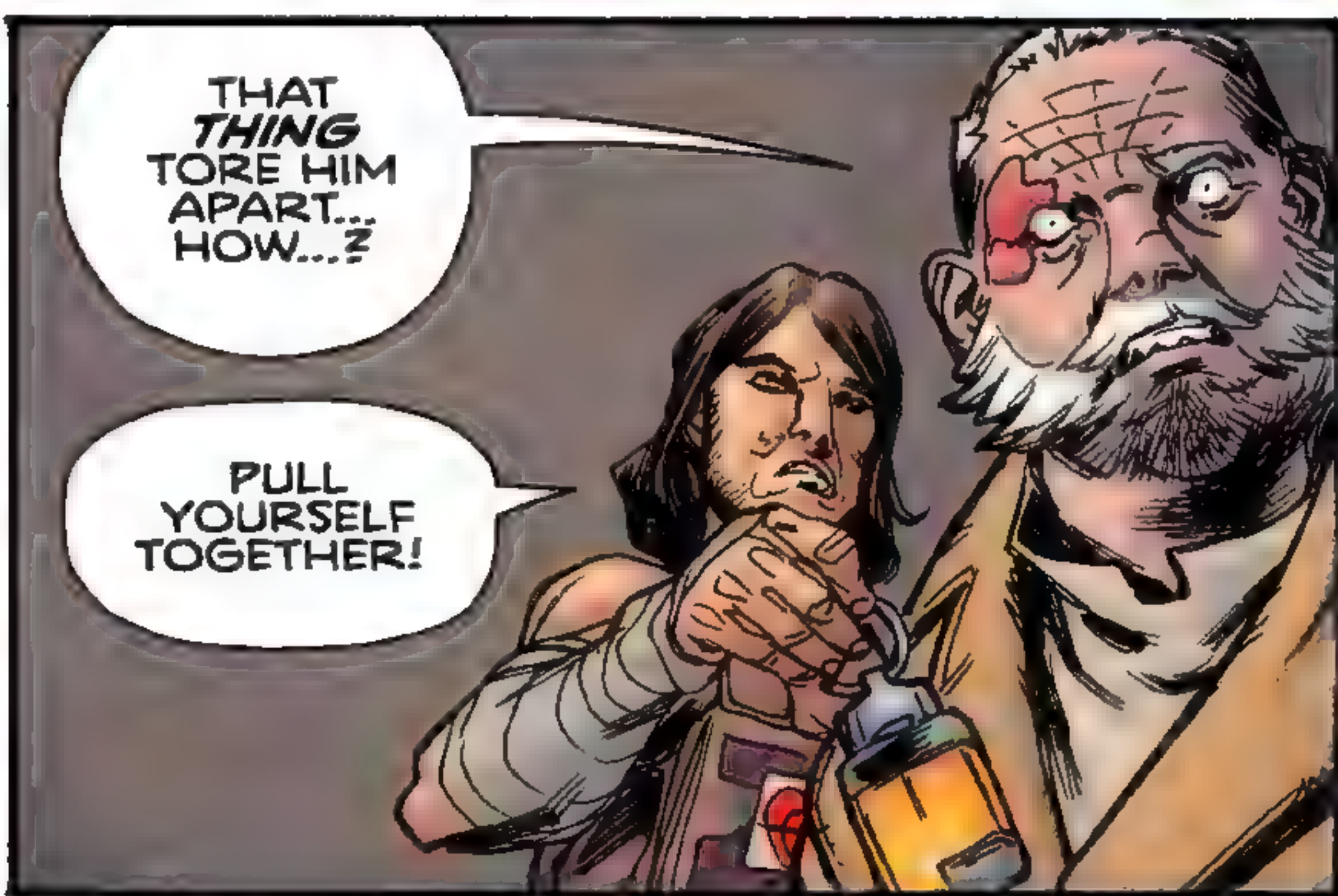




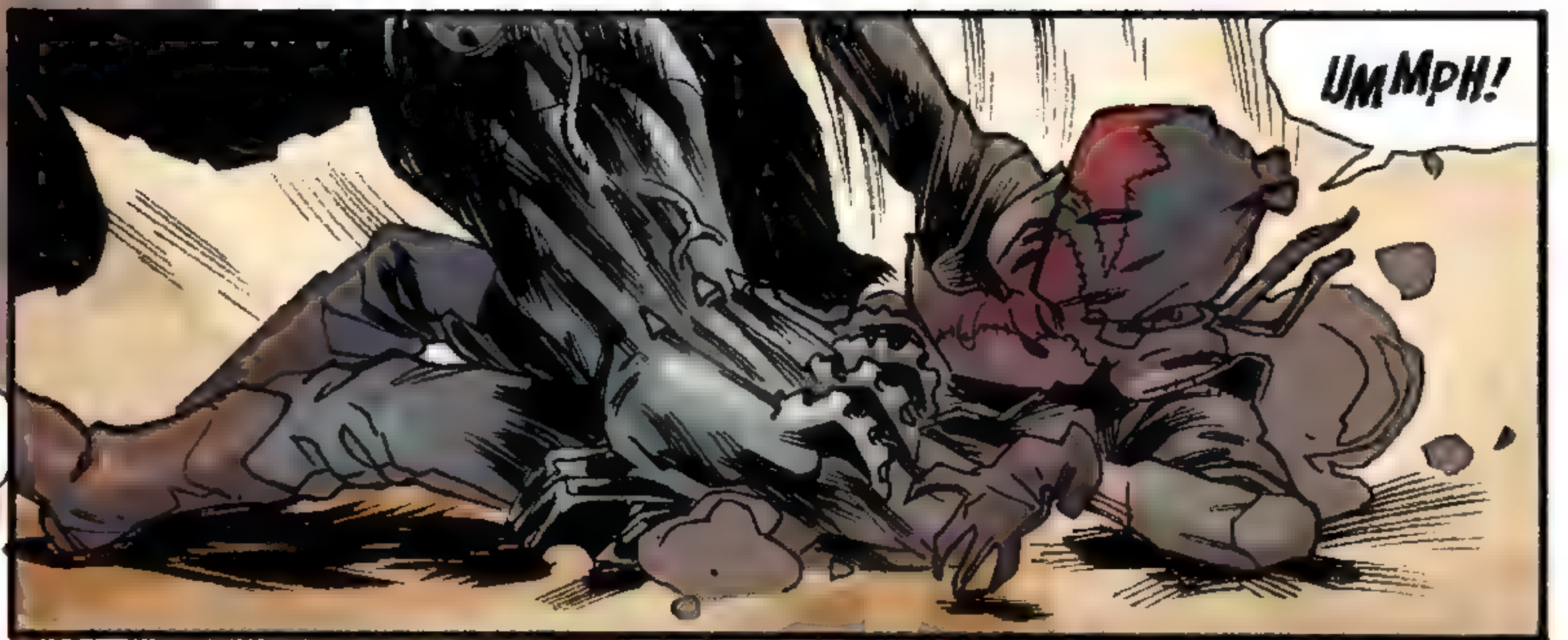
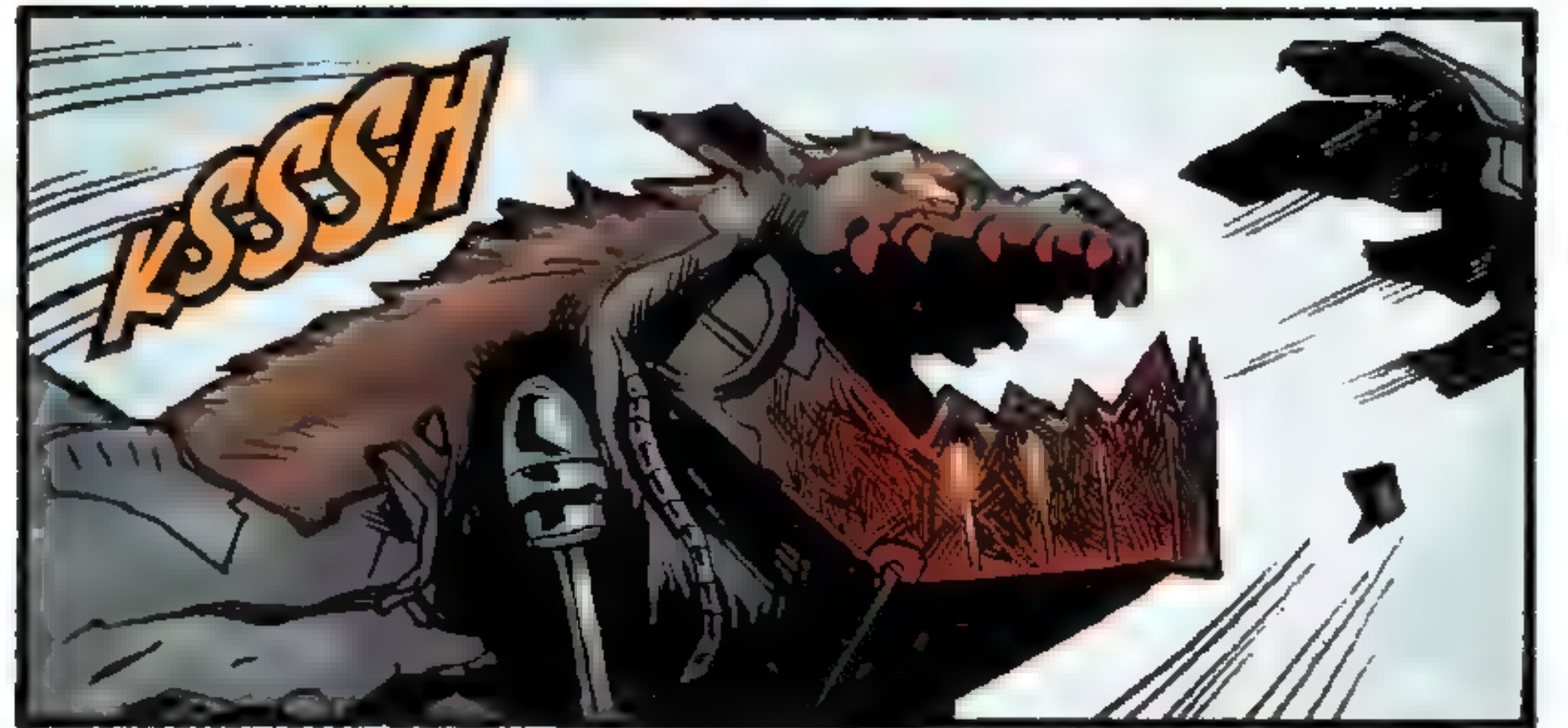
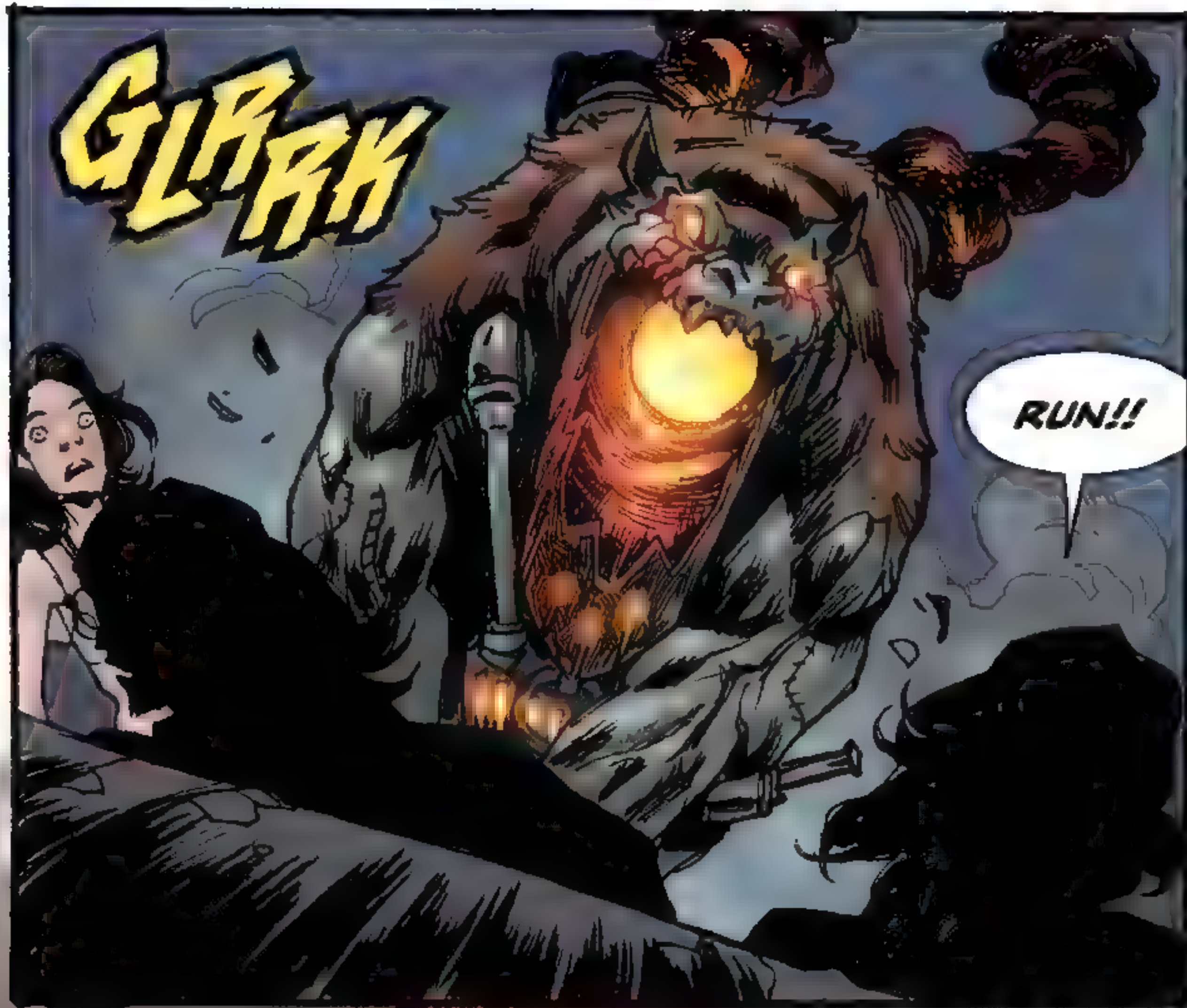




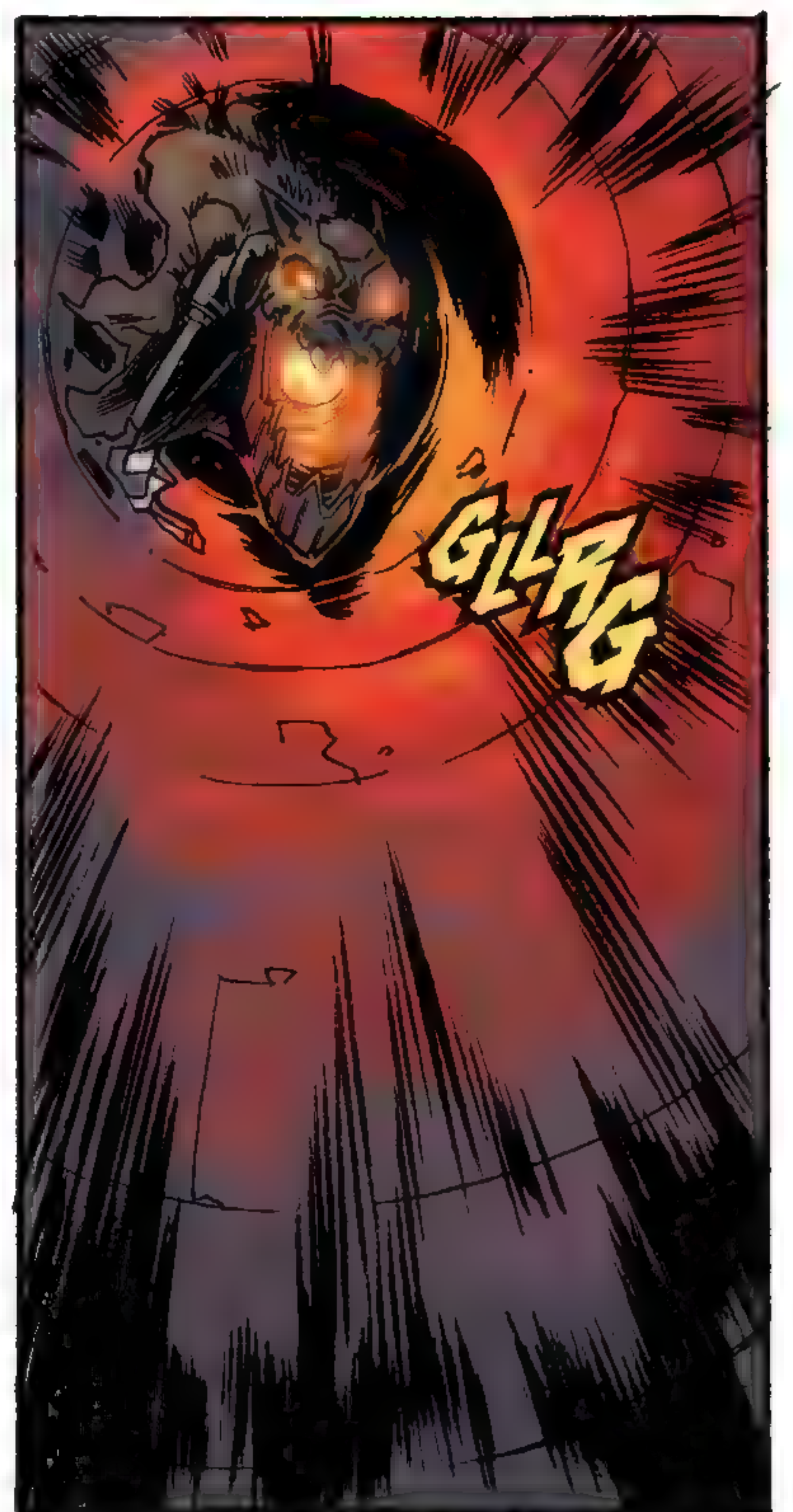














LISTEN...ALL OF YOU. I HAVE TO LEAVE YOU NOW AND I DON'T WANT ANY OF YOU TO FOLLOW. TRUST ME, THERE IS NOTHING ANY OF YOU COULD DO TO HELP. YOU HAVE ANZIO NOW AND...

ORCHID, YOU HAVE ALREADY HELPED ME MORE THAN YOU KNOW. BUT YOU CANNOT SAVE ME. WHAT LITTLE CHANCE THERE IS OF THAT...I MUST FIND OUT FOR MYSELF.

NO! WE'LL STAY HERE TILL YOU'RE BETTER AND...

WHAT?! YOU'RE BADLY HURT! OF COURSE WE CAN HELP YOU, WHATEVER YOU NEED...

ORCHID, I HAVE TO DO...WHAT I CAME HERE...TO... DO...??

OPAL!

SHE PASSED OUT!

I SAW IT WITH MY OWN EYES! GENERAL CHINA RUNNING **AMUCK** IN STADIA PENUEL! DOZENS, MAYBE **HUNDREDS** OF SOLDIERS WERE...

...SLAUGHTERED LIKE ANTS! AND IT WAS **SURELY** THE LEGENDARY MASK. THEY SAY THAT TOMO WOLFE HIMSELF...

...WAS SPEECHLESS AS THE REBEL PRISONER ESCAPED AND **THE GHOST OF GENERAL CHINA** FLEW OUT OF THE STADIUM AND **DISAPPEARED!**

THANK YOU, MY DEAR FRIEND. YOUR PRESENCE IS ALWAYS A GREAT COMFORT.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TRICKERY IS AFOOT, BUT THAT WAS **NOT** A SUPERNATURAL SPECTER IN THE STADIUM TODAY. JUST THE **IDEA** THAT SOMEONE WOULD **DARE...**

I HAVE COME **TOO FAR** TO HAVE **MY DAY** MARRIED BY SOME CHARLATAN IN A PAINTED HOOD!





"FOR I WAS CONCEIVED  
IN THE RAPE CHAMBERS OF A  
DERELICT CANNIBAL BARGE."

YOU MAY  
TAKE YOUR PICK,  
GENTLEMEN...

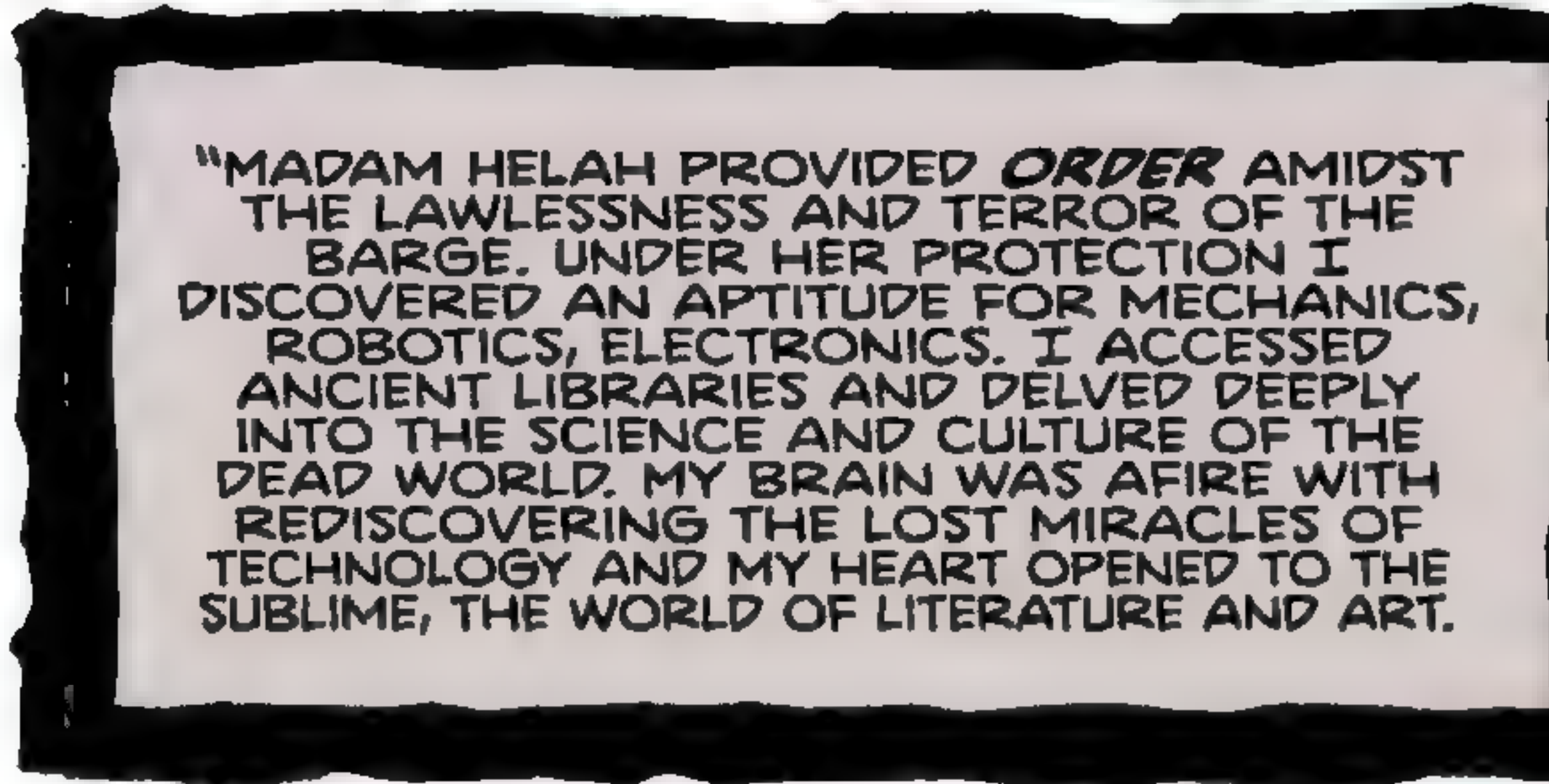


"AND RAISED IN THE  
BABY FARMS WHERE THE  
CHILDREN ARE FATTENED  
BEFORE SLAUGHTER."

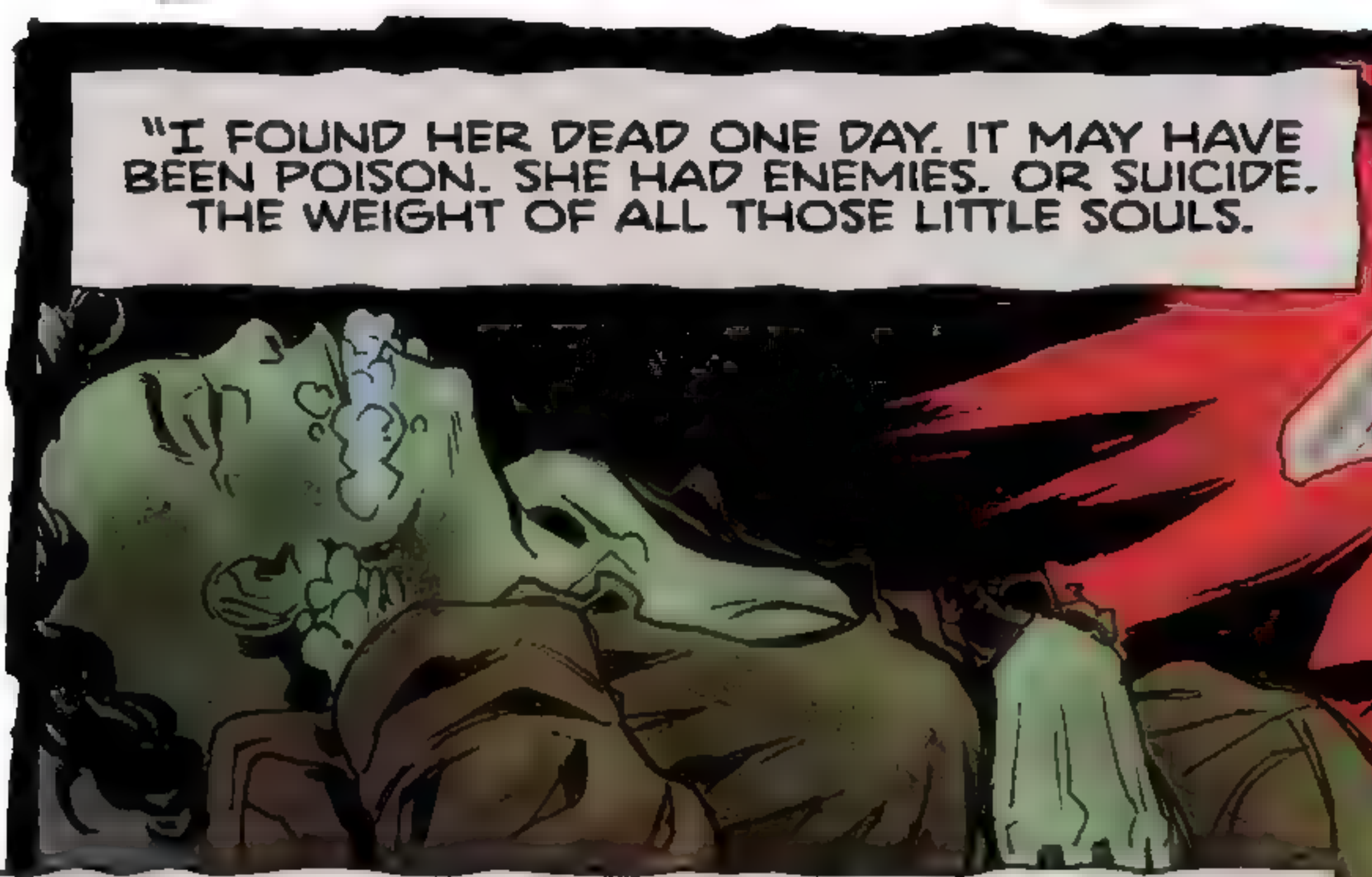
"THAT IS WHERE I  
CAUGHT THE EYE OF  
MADAM HELAH."



Sha-ha! THIS ONE KEEPS  
ESCAPING FROM HIS BIN!  
**EXCELLENT** SURVIVAL  
INSTINCTS, CHILD! EXCELLENT!



"MADAM HELAH PROVIDED **ORDER** AMIDST  
THE LAWLESSNESS AND TERROR OF THE  
BARGE. UNDER HER PROTECTION I  
DISCOVERED AN APTITUDE FOR MECHANICS,  
ROBOTICS, ELECTRONICS. I ACCESSED  
ANCIENT LIBRARIES AND DELVED DEEPLY  
INTO THE SCIENCE AND CULTURE OF THE  
DEAD WORLD. MY BRAIN WAS AFIRE WITH  
REDISCOVERING THE LOST MIRACLES OF  
TECHNOLOGY AND MY HEART OPENED TO THE  
SUBLIME, THE WORLD OF LITERATURE AND ART."




"I FOUND HER DEAD ONE DAY. IT MAY HAVE  
BEEN POISON. SHE HAD ENEMIES. OR SUICIDE.  
THE WEIGHT OF ALL THOSE LITTLE SOULS."




"UNTIL THEN I HAD HOPED FOR A LIFE OF  
STUDY AND REFLECTION. BUT HOPE IS THE  
WORST OF EVILS, FOR **HOPE** PROLONGS THE  
TORMENTS OF MAN. HOPE INVITES DOUBT  
AND COURTS THE UNKNOWN."

"NOW I WAS ALONE, UNTETHERED.  
GLAD TO BE RID OF THE **BURDEN** OF  
HOPE. I WAS FREE. FREE TO GAZE  
INTO THE ABYSS OF **TRUTH**."






"BUT IF YOU GAZE FOR  
LONG INTO AN ABYSS, THE  
ABYSS ALSO GAZES INTO YOU."



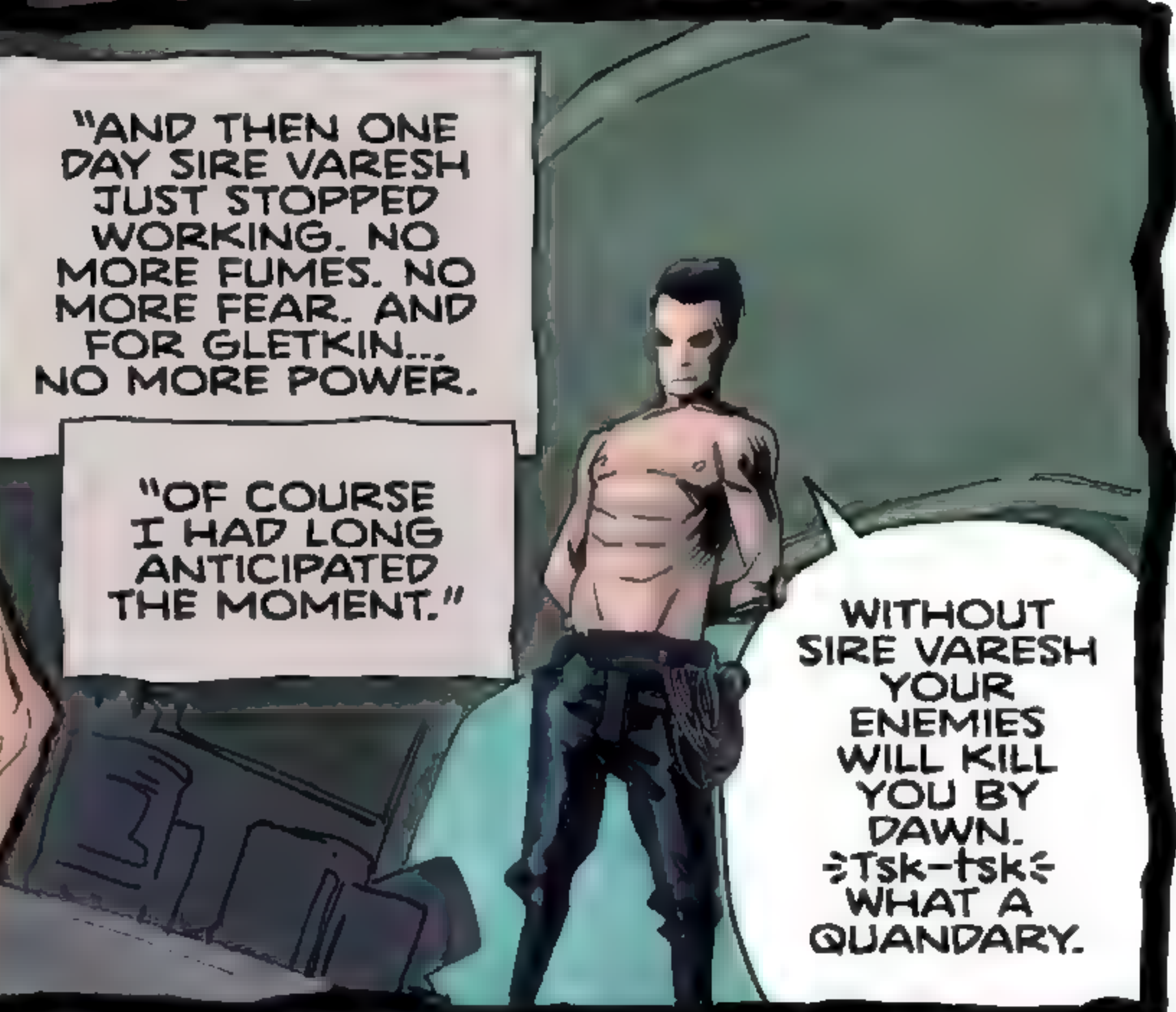
"I QUICKLY ROSE TO THE ROLE OF ATTACHÉ  
DEFENSE MINISTER TO THE BARGE MASTER.  
GLETKIN. A RESOURCEFUL BRUTE IN HIS YOUTH."

"GLETKIN  
MAINTAINED  
POWER  
THROUGH  
**FEAR**. FEAR  
OF A  
TERRIFYING  
KILLING  
MACHINE--A  
HUGE, OIL-  
COVERED  
MONSTROSITY  
OF RETRO  
TECHNOLOGY.  
SIRE VARESH."



"AND THEN ONE  
DAY SIRE VARESH  
JUST STOPPED  
WORKING. NO  
MORE FUMES. NO  
MORE FEAR. AND  
FOR GLETKIN...  
NO MORE POWER."

"OF COURSE  
I HAD LONG  
ANTICIPATED  
THE MOMENT."



WITHOUT  
SIRE VARESH  
YOUR  
ENEMIES  
WILL KILL  
YOU BY  
DAWN.  
≡tsk-tsk≡  
WHAT A  
QUANDARY."



I CAN FIX  
YOUR MONSTER.  
I CAN KEEP IT  
RUNNING. MAKE  
THEM AFRAID  
AGAIN. BUT  
THERE'S ONE  
CONDITION.

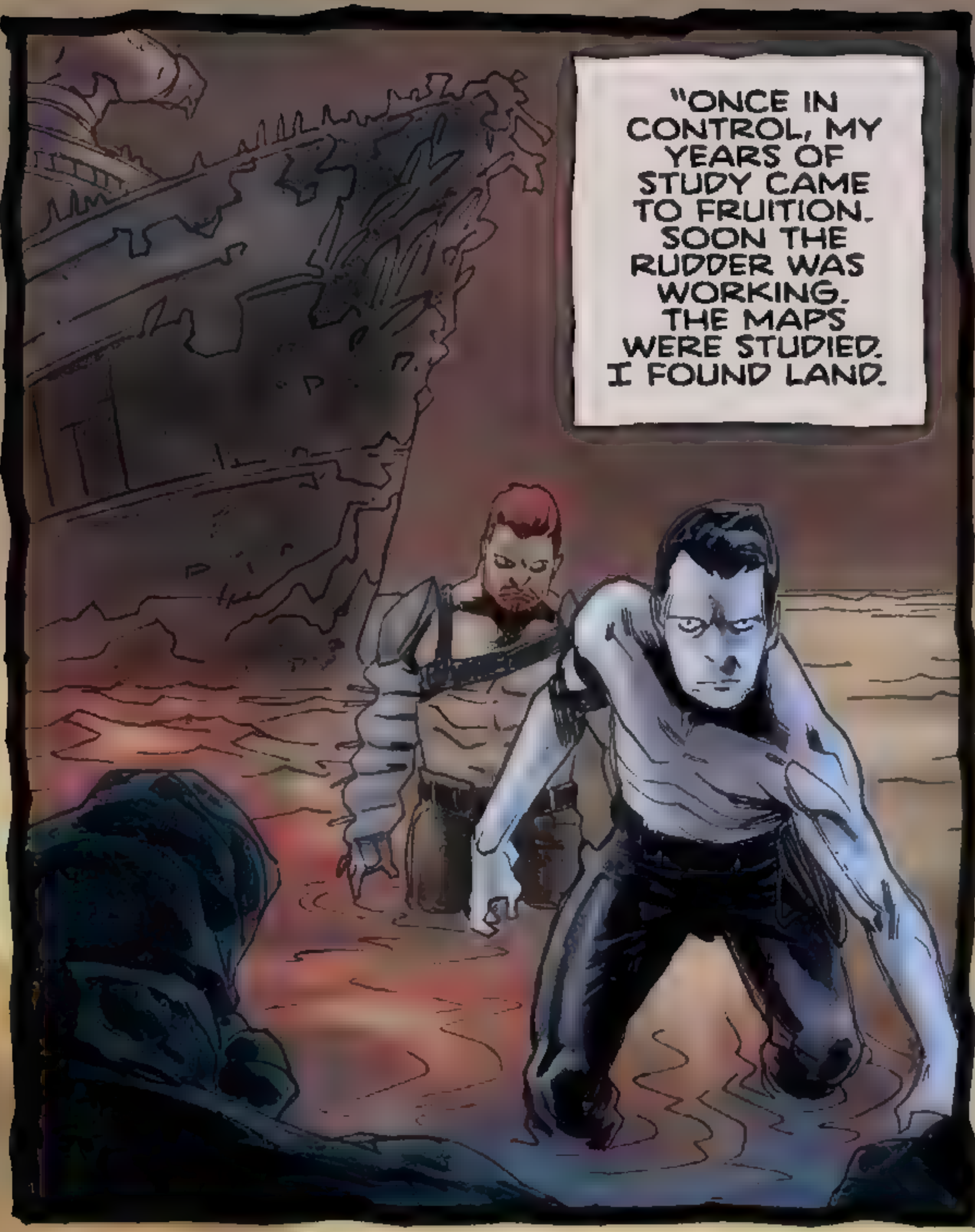
YOU  
WORK  
FOR *ME*  
NOW.



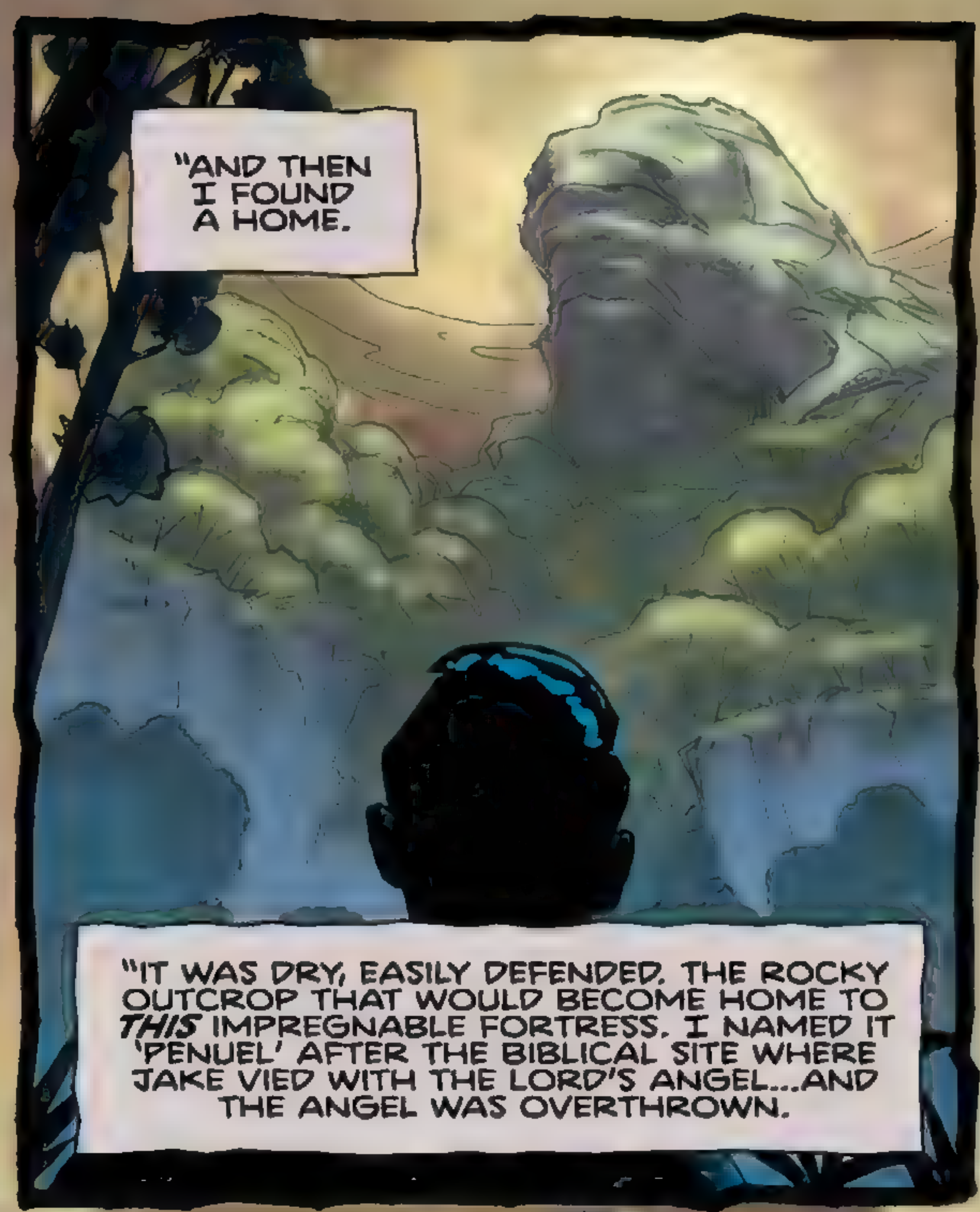
BUT...!  
YOU...

≡Sigh≡  
YES. YES...  
MY LORD.




A comic book panel showing two men in a flooded, ruined city. The man in the foreground is shirtless and muscular, looking forward with a determined expression. The man behind him has red hair and a beard, wearing a dark vest. They are standing in shallow water, with the ruins of a city in the background.

"ONCE IN CONTROL, MY YEARS OF STUDY CAME TO FRUITION. SOON THE RUDDER WAS WORKING. THE MAPS WERE STUDIED. I FOUND LAND.

A comic book panel showing a person from behind, looking out over a vast, rocky landscape. The person is wearing a dark helmet with a blue visor. The landscape is filled with large, jagged rock formations under a hazy sky.

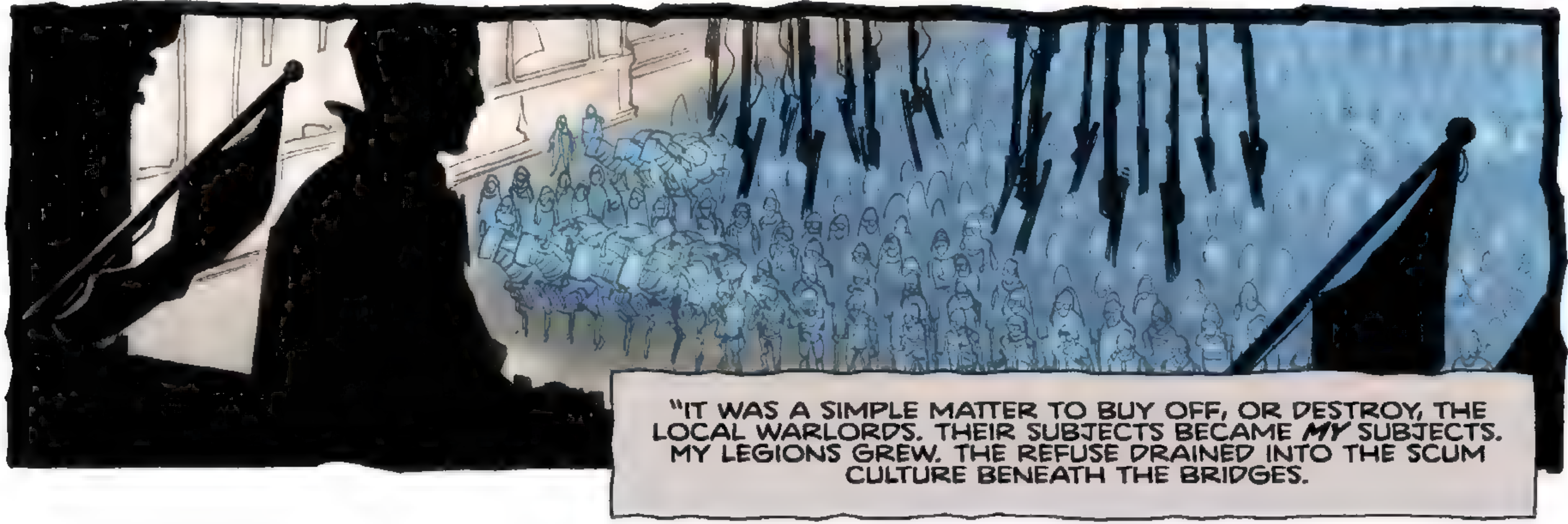
"AND THEN I FOUND A HOME.

"IT WAS DRY, EASILY DEFENDED. THE ROCKY OUTCROP THAT WOULD BECOME HOME TO *THIS* IMPREGNABLE FORTRESS. I NAMED IT 'PENUEL' AFTER THE BIBLICAL SITE WHERE JAKE VIED WITH THE LORD'S ANGEL...AND THE ANGEL WAS OVERTHROWN.

A comic book panel showing a large, dilapidated industrial building, likely a factory, with smoke rising from its chimneys. In the foreground, there are several figures, including one in a dark, hooded cloak, looking towards the building. The scene is set in a dark, overgrown area.

"NEXT, THE ROBOTICS FACTORY.

"THE TECHNOLOGY WAS RUDIMENTARY REALLY, THE WATERLOGGED PIECES ALL JUST WAITING FOR SOMEONE WHO KNEW HOW TO TURN ON THE POWER. SOON I HAD AN ARMY OF MECHANICAL SERVANTS AND WEAPONS TO TAME WHATEVER I ENCOUNTERED.

A comic book panel showing a large crowd of people in a city. The crowd is diverse, with many people wearing hats and coats. They are gathered in a large open space, possibly a square or a street. In the background, there are tall buildings and a flagpole with a flag.

"IT WAS A SIMPLE MATTER TO BUY OFF, OR DESTROY, THE LOCAL WARLORDS. THEIR SUBJECTS BECAME *MY* SUBJECTS. MY LEGIONS GREW. THE REFUSE DRAINED INTO THE SCUM CULTURE BENEATH THE BRIDGES.



"AND THEN I FORGED THE ULTIMATE  
WARRIORS, MY *CANNIBAL GUARDS*."



"THEY WERE A TRIBE OF MUTANTS FROM ANOTHER BARGE  
AND BIRTHED IN A BABY-FARM SLAUGHTER BIN NOT  
DISSIMILAR TO MY OWN. THEY MUTINIED, DEVoured ALL  
ON BOARD IN A PIRANHA-LIKE FRENZY, AND SWAM MILES  
TO SHORE. THEY RECOGNIZED ME AS KIN, AS THEIR RULER."

"BUT THEY ARE TOO  
SAVAGE TO LIVE  
AMONG US. I LOCKED  
THEIR DISTENDED JAWS  
TIGHT AND STORED  
THEM IN BUNKERS FAR  
FROM HERE, WHERE  
THEY CHEW THEIR  
BONDS IN FRENZY. I  
MAY NEVER NEED TO  
CALL ON THEM."

"BUT THEY  
ARE THERE."

"WAITING."



"IN FORTRESS PENUEL I HAVE BUILT  
A SOCIETY IN *MY* IMAGE. THERE WILL  
BE NO LAWLESSNESS *HERE*."

THERE  
IS *NO* FORCE  
IN *THIS* WORLD  
THAT CAN  
CHALLENGE *US*,  
BARRABAS. AND  
NO ONE, *NO*  
*ONE*, CAN  
ESCAPE OUR  
WRATH  
WHEN IT IS  
LOOSED.

LEAVE  
ME NOW, MY  
FRIEND. TODAY'S  
EPISODE WILL  
PASS.

"HERE, ORDER  
PREVAELS."




THE FORTRESS  
PENUEL  
NO LAWLESSNESS



"HERE, ORDER  
MUST *ALWAYS*  
PREVAIL."



A man with a stern expression, wearing a white robe with a yellow sash adorned with various medals, stands in a library. He holds a large globe of the Earth. The library is filled with bookshelves, some containing books labeled '738674'. On a shelf to the left, there is a bust of a man and a can of 'TOMATO SOUP'. To the right, a human skull sits on a shelf. The background shows a window with a view of a city.

"HISTORY IS NOT A LADDER TO HUMAN WISDOM. IT IS A TREE ON WHICH EACH BRANCH AND BUD IS A PRODUCT OF CONTINGENCY, UNREPEATABLE, UNPREDICTABLE, DEEPENING, AND GROWING WITH THE PASSAGE OF TIME. IN THE SILENCE OF MY PRIVATE CHAMBER, THE ART AND LITERATURE OF MY YOUTH PLAY IN ENDLESS REELS IN MY EVER-RESTLESS MIND."

"I THOUGHT I HAD ERADICATED ANY CHALLENGE. I WAS CERTAIN I HAD *ELIMINATED* THE UNKNOWN."

"UNTIL NOW."

"NOW I MUST TRUST TO *HOPE* THAT AN OLD ENEMY HAS NOT RISEN FROM THE DEAD."



THIS SHOULD SLOW THE BLEEDING, BUT SHE'S STILL UNCONSCIOUS AND FEVERISH.

NOW THAT THE STRANGE NOISE IN THE WALL HAS PASSED, WE HAVE TO GET HER HELP!



ALL RIGHT. LET'S GET HER BACK DOWN THE PASSAGEWAY. WESTIN AND I WILL DISTRACT THE CREATURE, AND YOU AND SIMON GET HER AWAY. IF WE CAN REACH THE BRIDGES, WE CAN GET HER MEDICINE AND PREPARE ANOTHER ASSAULT ON--

HOLD ON! THIS ISN'T OUR FIGHT ANYMORE!

AND WHO SAYS *YOU'RE* IN CHARGE, ANYWAY? OPAL HAD IT COMING, THINKING SHE COULD SINGLE-HANDEDLY DEFEAT TOMO WOLFE'S ARMY. I SAY WE LEAVE HER HERE AND MAKE A RUN FOR IT.





WE ARE **NOT** LEAVING HER HERE AFTER ALL SHE'S DONE FOR US...FOR **ME!** I'D RATHER DIE THAN ABANDON HER!

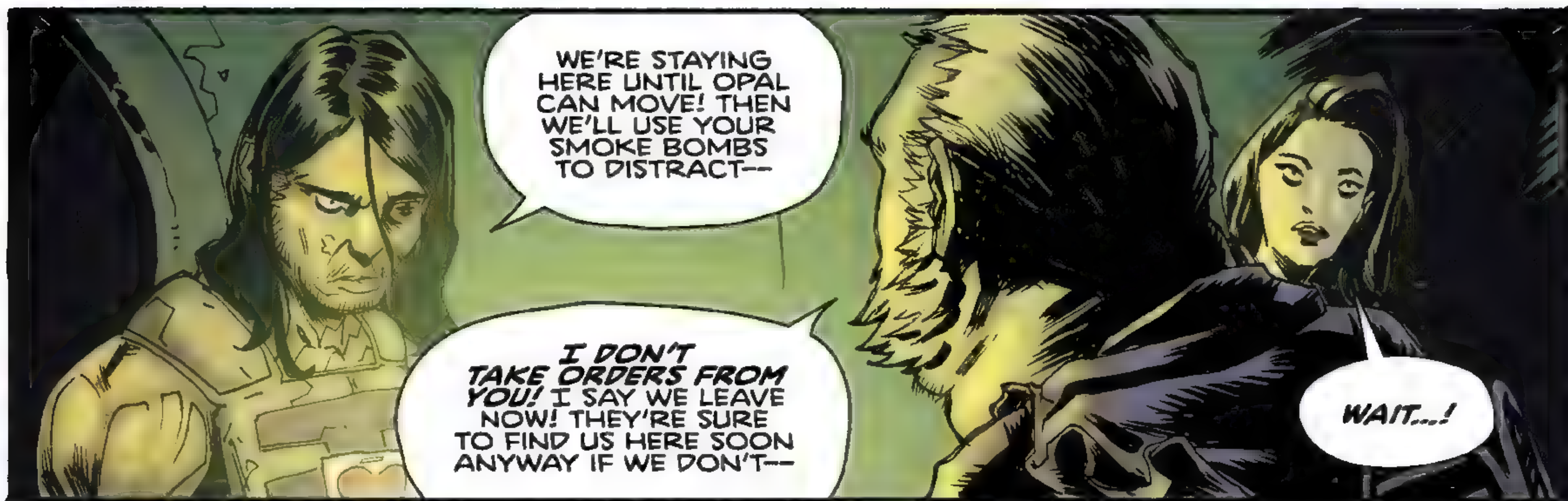


OPAL MUST BE A **SAINT** IF SHE CAN SURVIVE WEARING THE MASK, ORCHID. THIS IS WHAT THE REBELLION HAS BEEN WAITING FOR. WE **HAVE** TO GET HER BACK TO THE BRIDGES.

I JUST WANT HER TO BE WELL. SHE'S... ALL I HAVE LEFT IN THE WORLD.



THAT **WEAKLING** SIMON AND THE GIRL CAN'T EVEN FIGHT! WE HAVE **NO** CHANCE IF WE BRING OPAL. LET'S CONCENTRATE ON WHAT'S IMPORTANT--GETTING OUT OF HERE ALIVE AND, YES, COMPENSATING ME FOR THE LOSS OF FEATHERS!



WE'RE STAYING HERE UNTIL OPAL CAN MOVE! THEN WE'LL USE YOUR SMOKE BOMBS TO DISTRACT--

**I DON'T TAKE ORDERS FROM YOU!** I SAY WE LEAVE NOW! THEY'RE SURE TO FIND US HERE SOON ANYWAY IF WE DON'T--

WAIT...!



WHERE'S OPAL?



SHUM SHUM  
SHUM O'REE...SOLDIERS  
STILL AND ORDERLY, ARM  
TO ARM AND KNEE TO  
KNEE, WAITING FOR THE  
GREAT EVENT...

...STANDS  
THE SILENT  
REGIMENT.



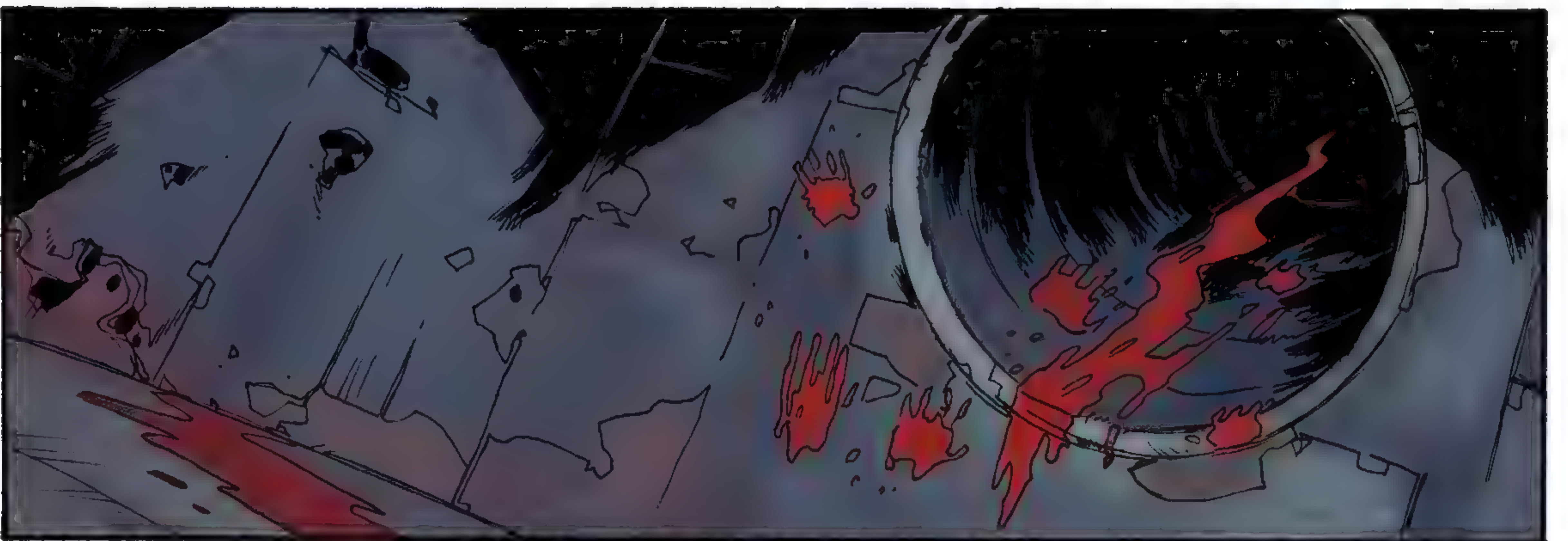
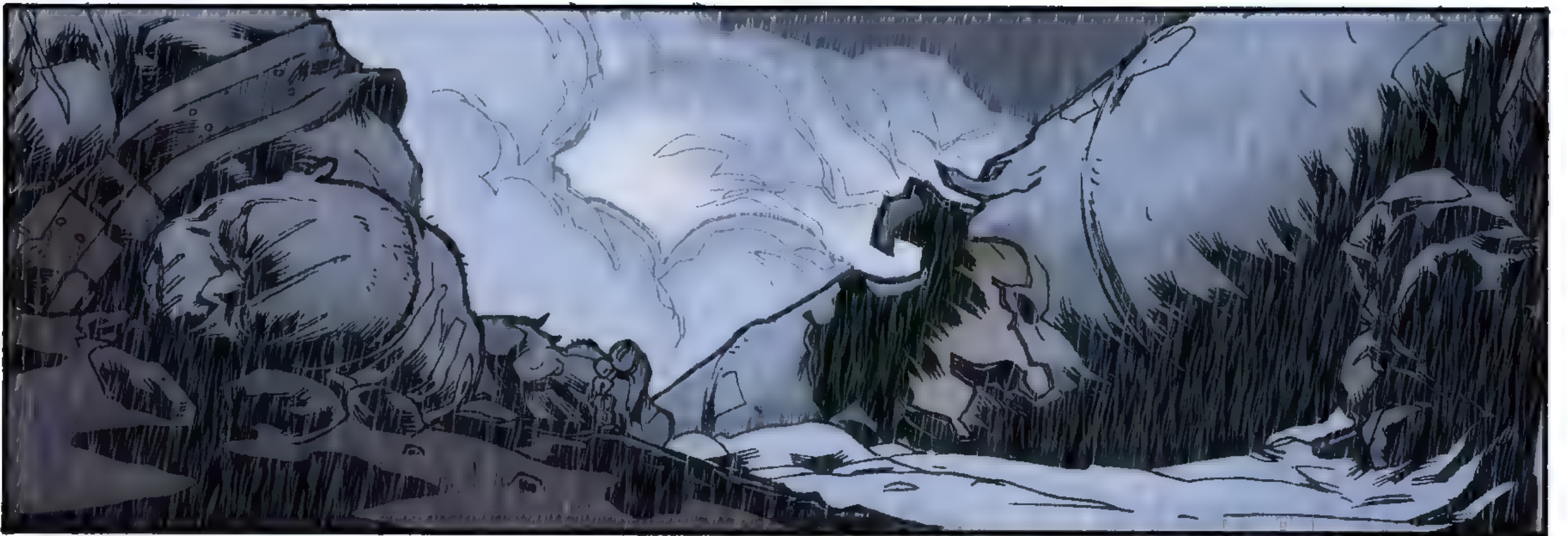
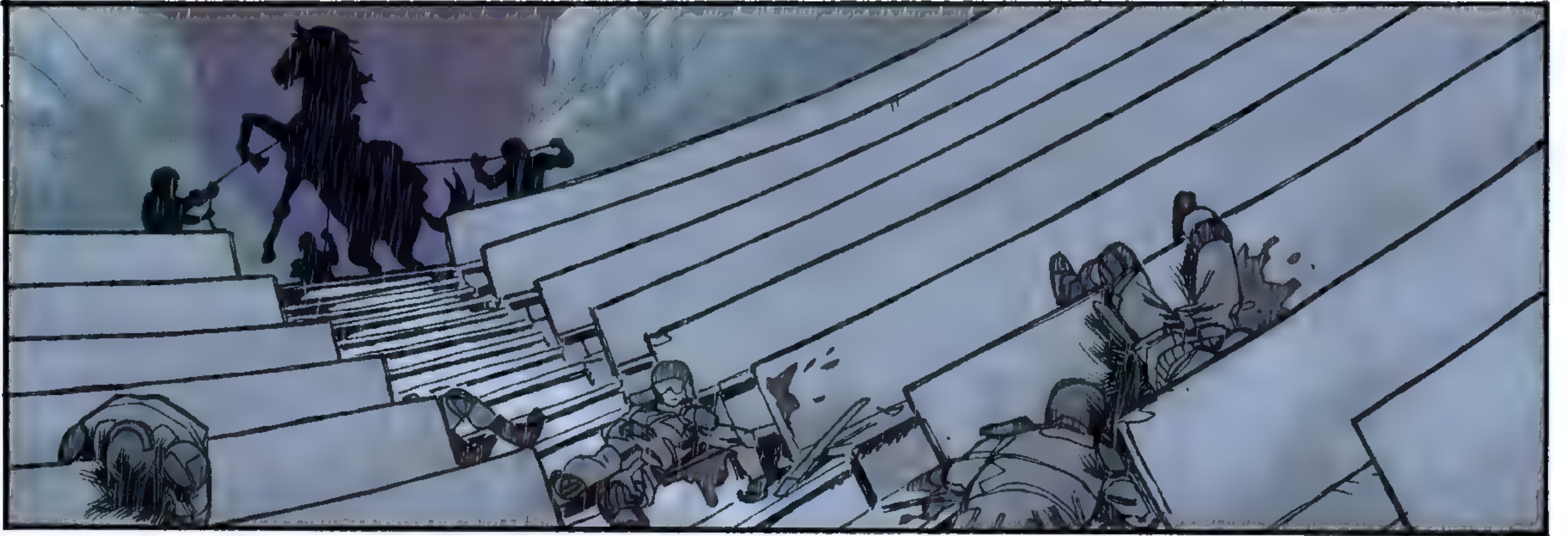
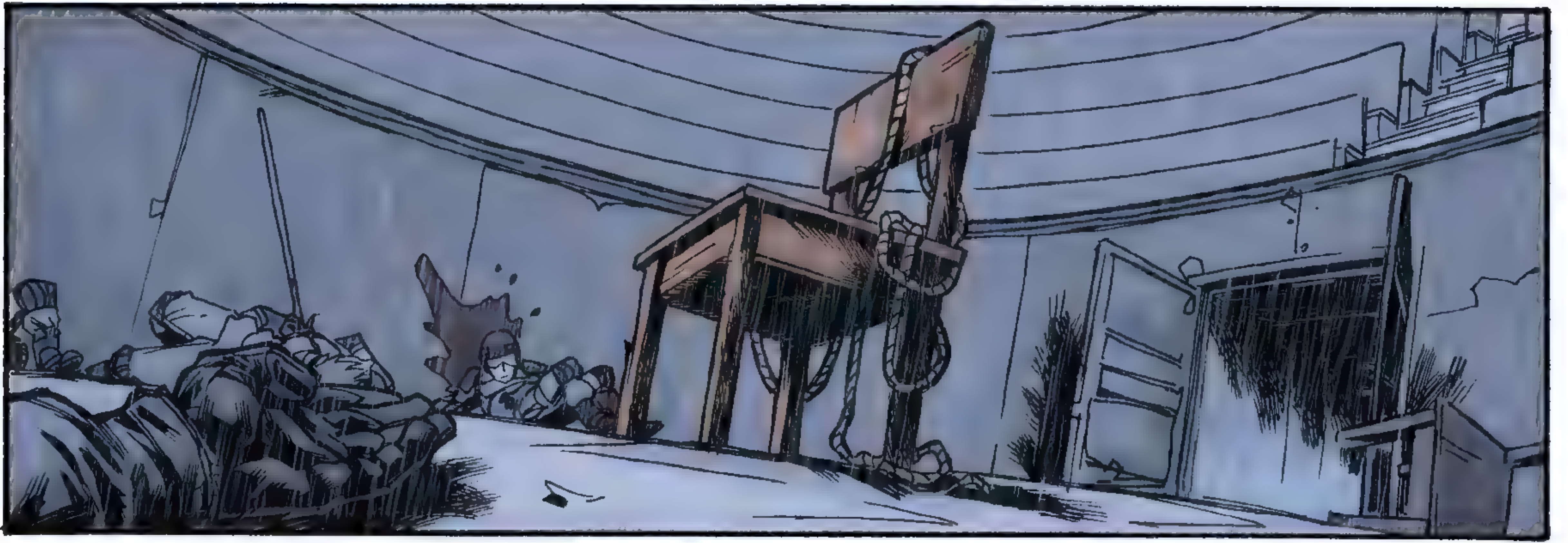




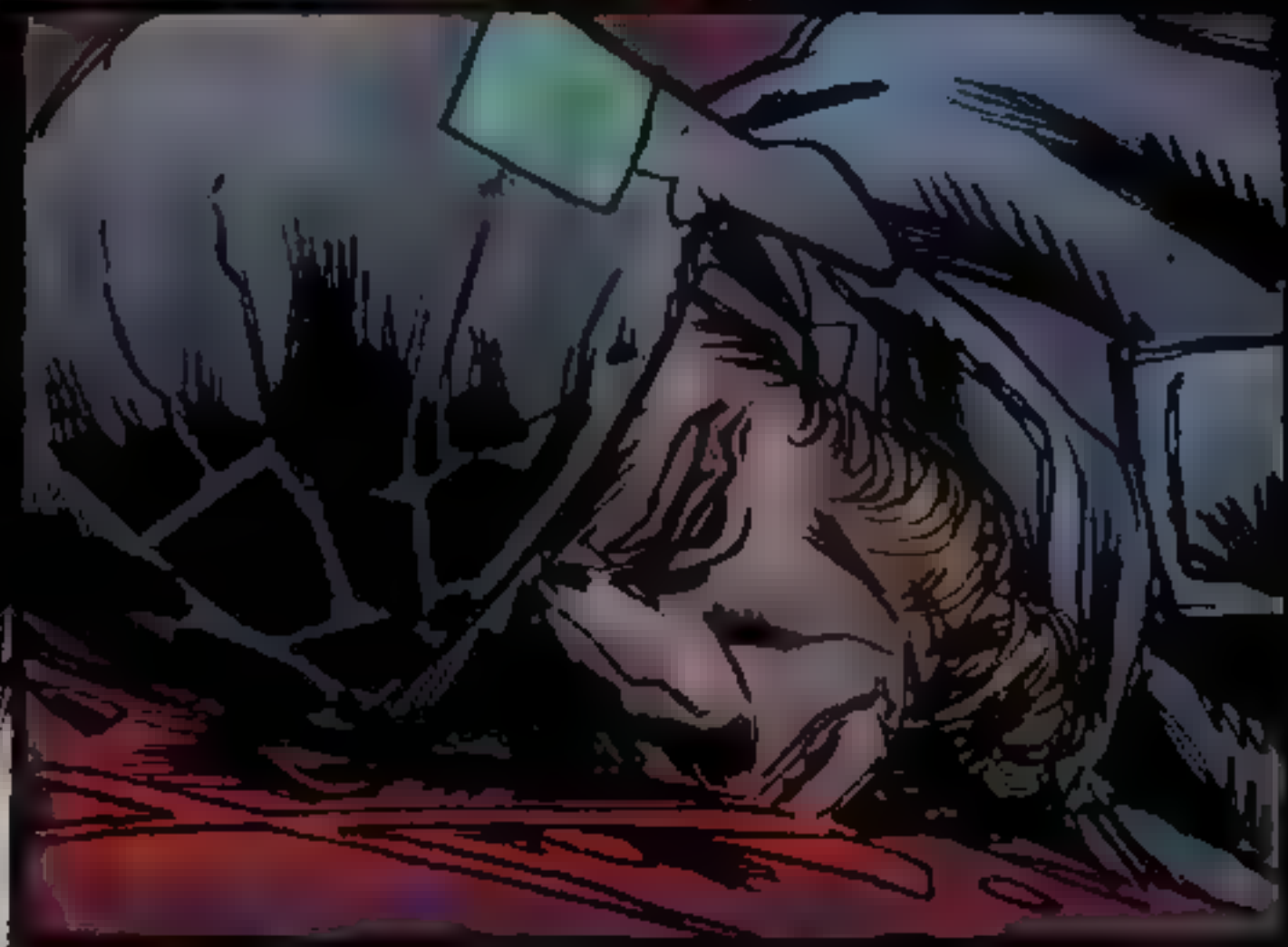
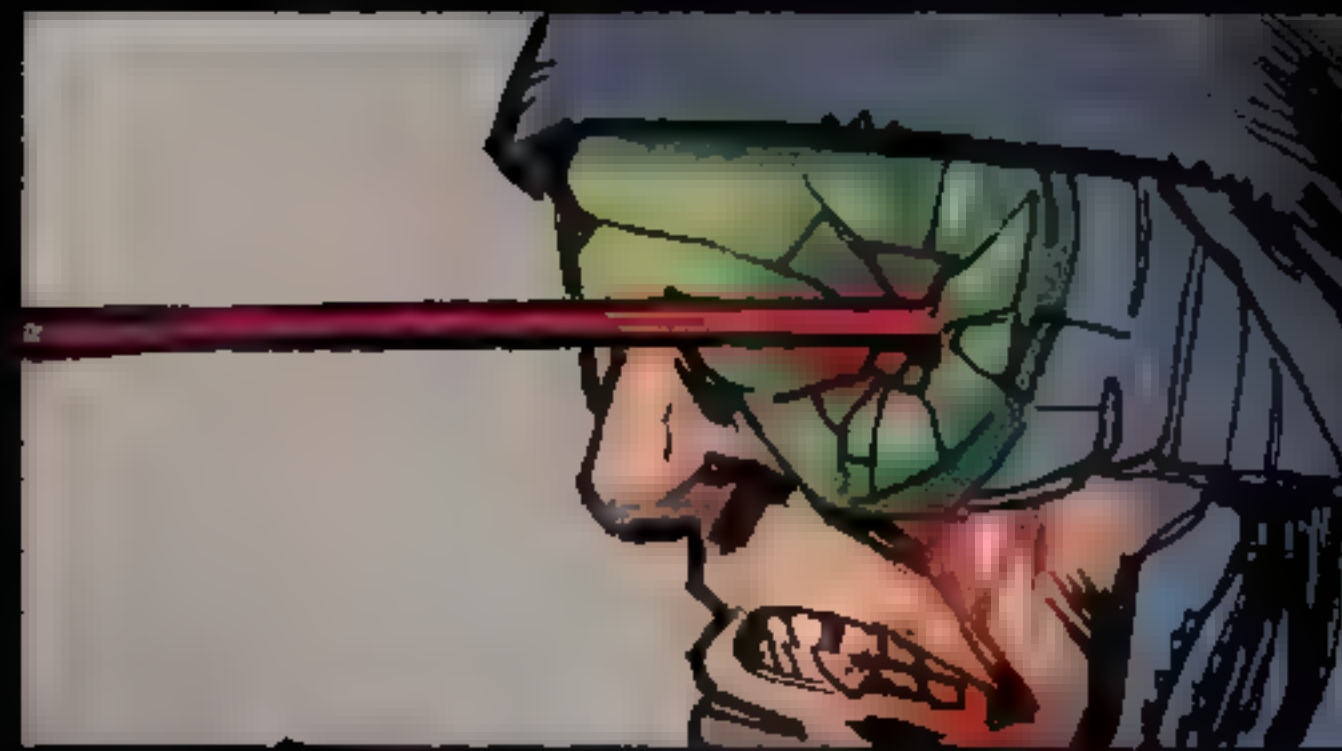




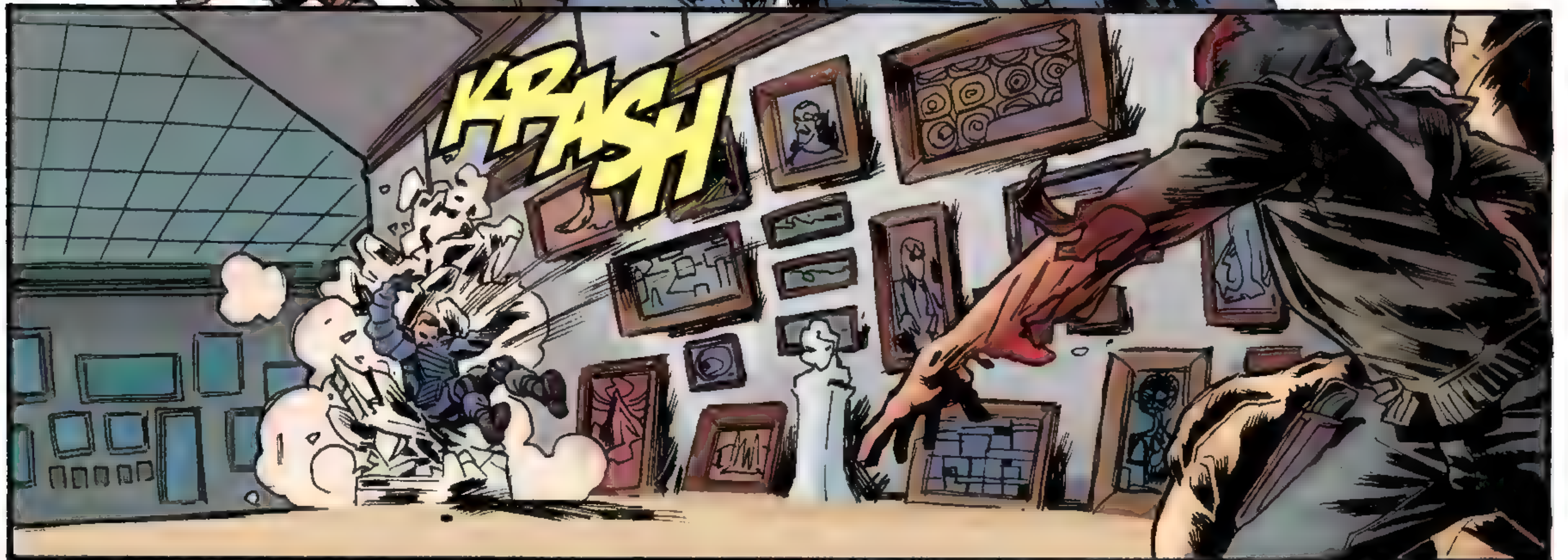
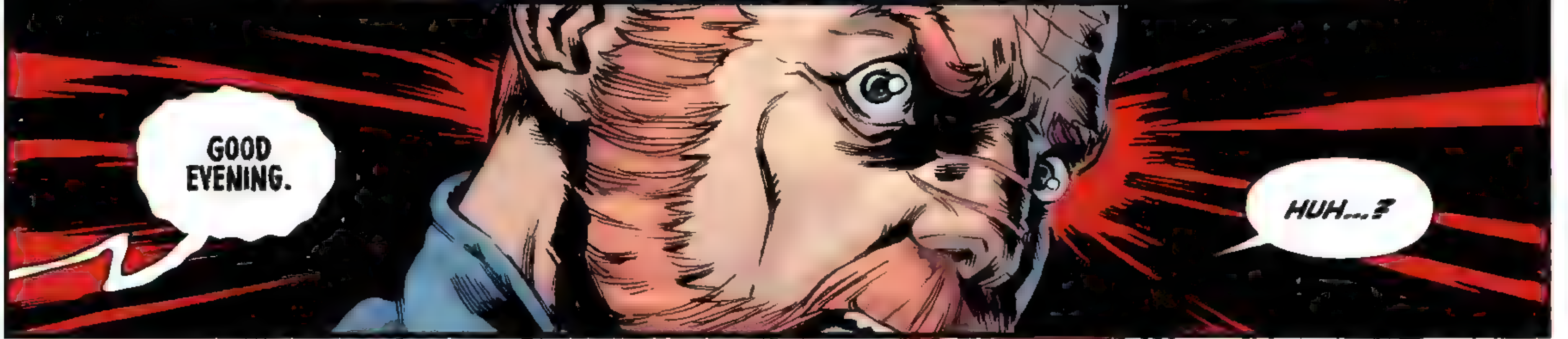
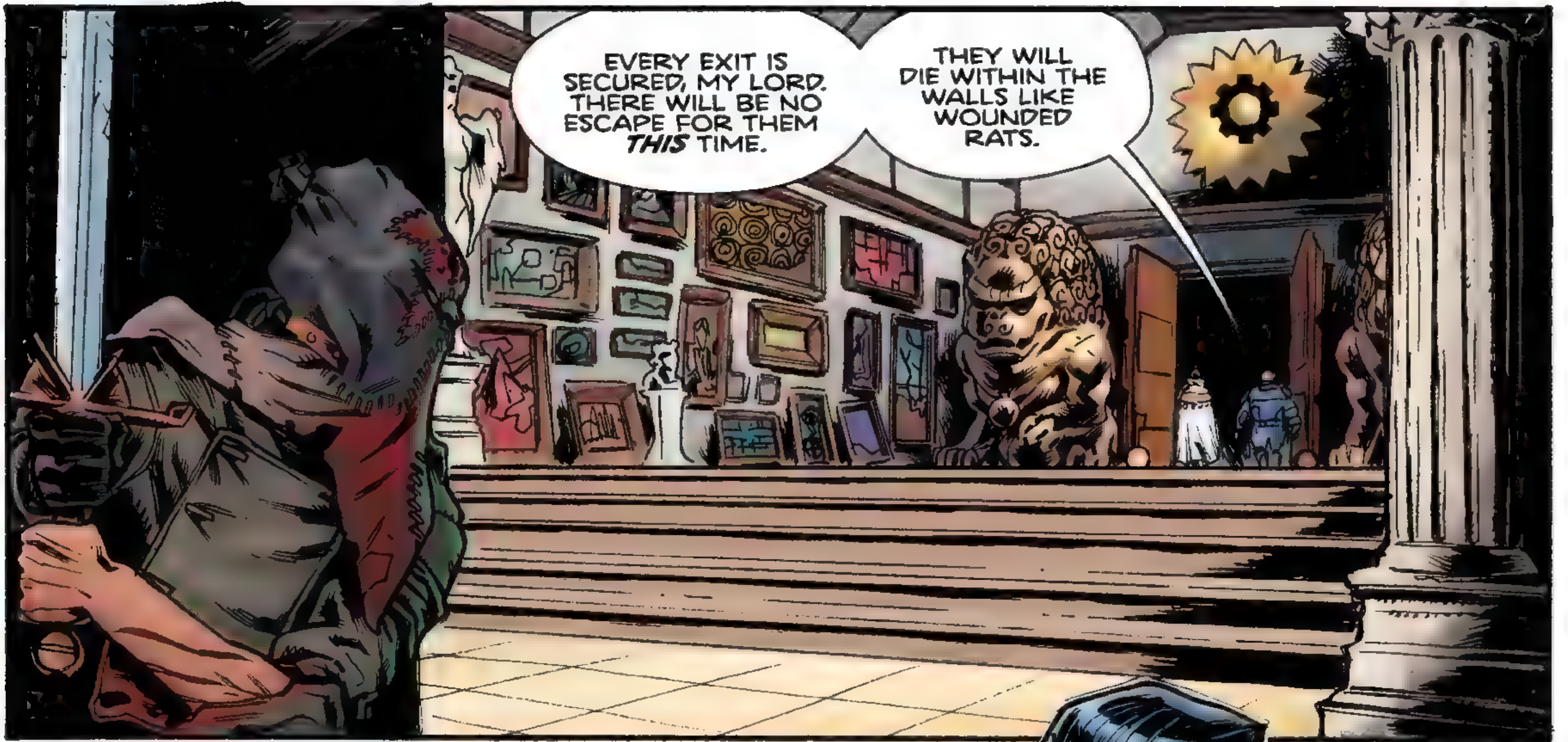




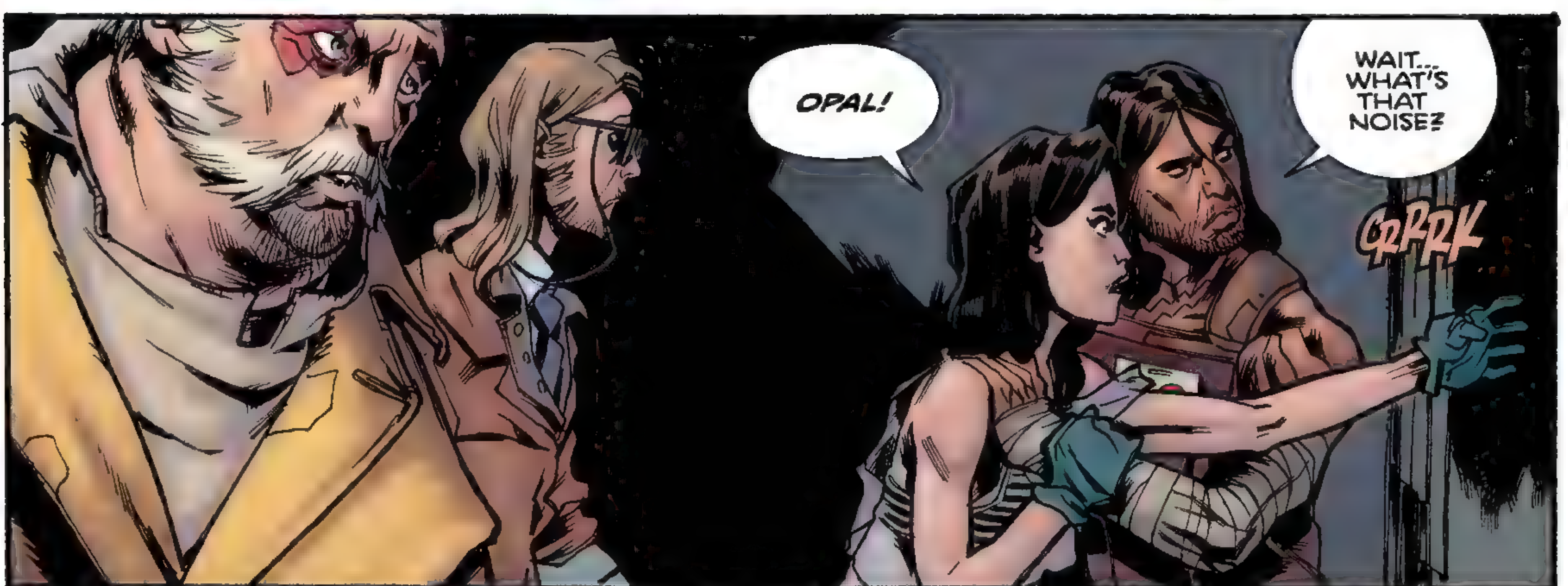
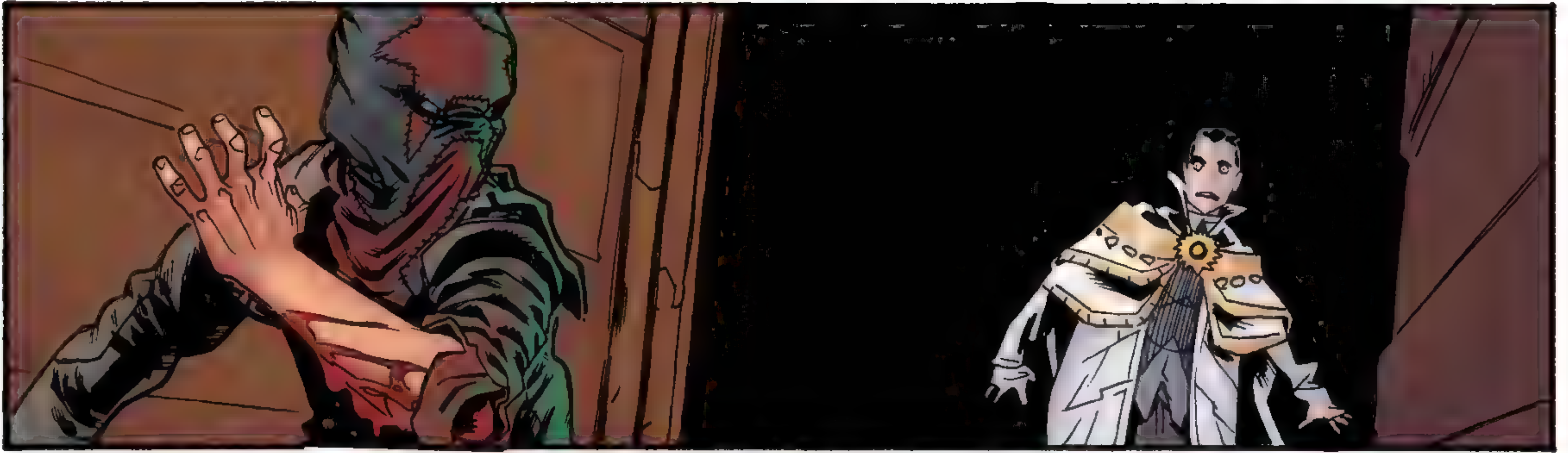
























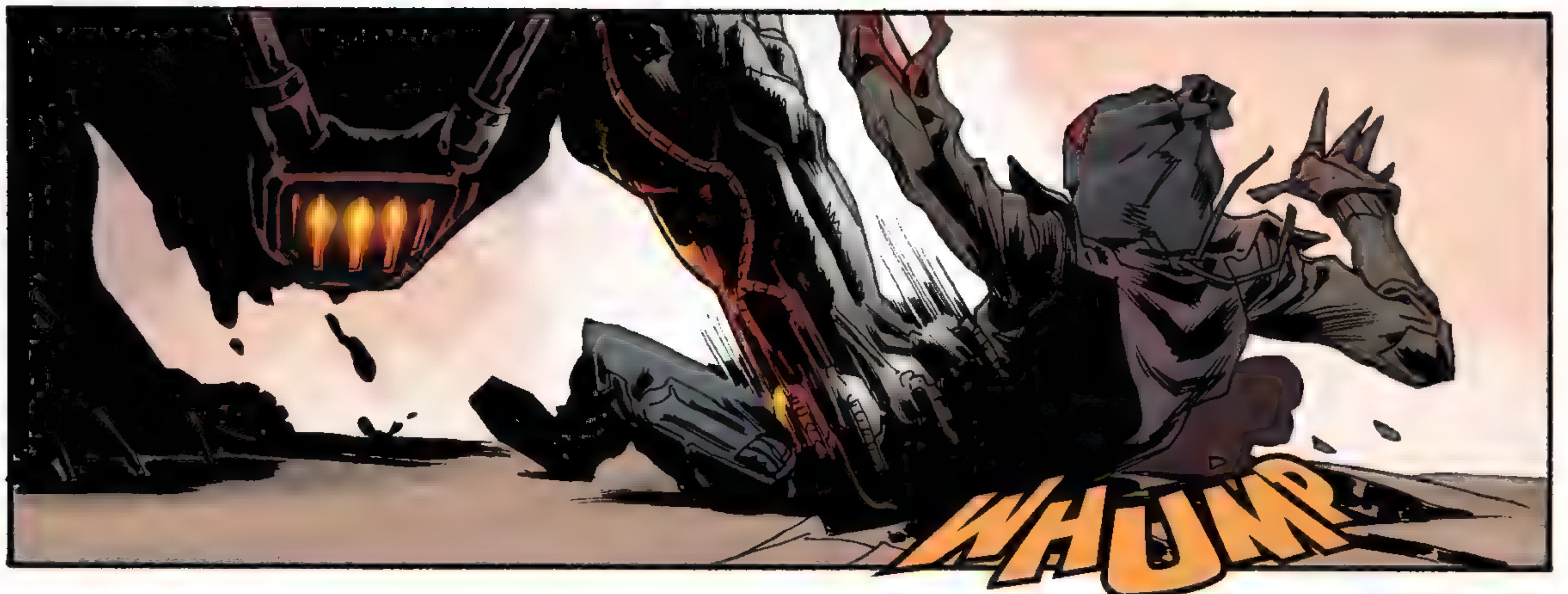
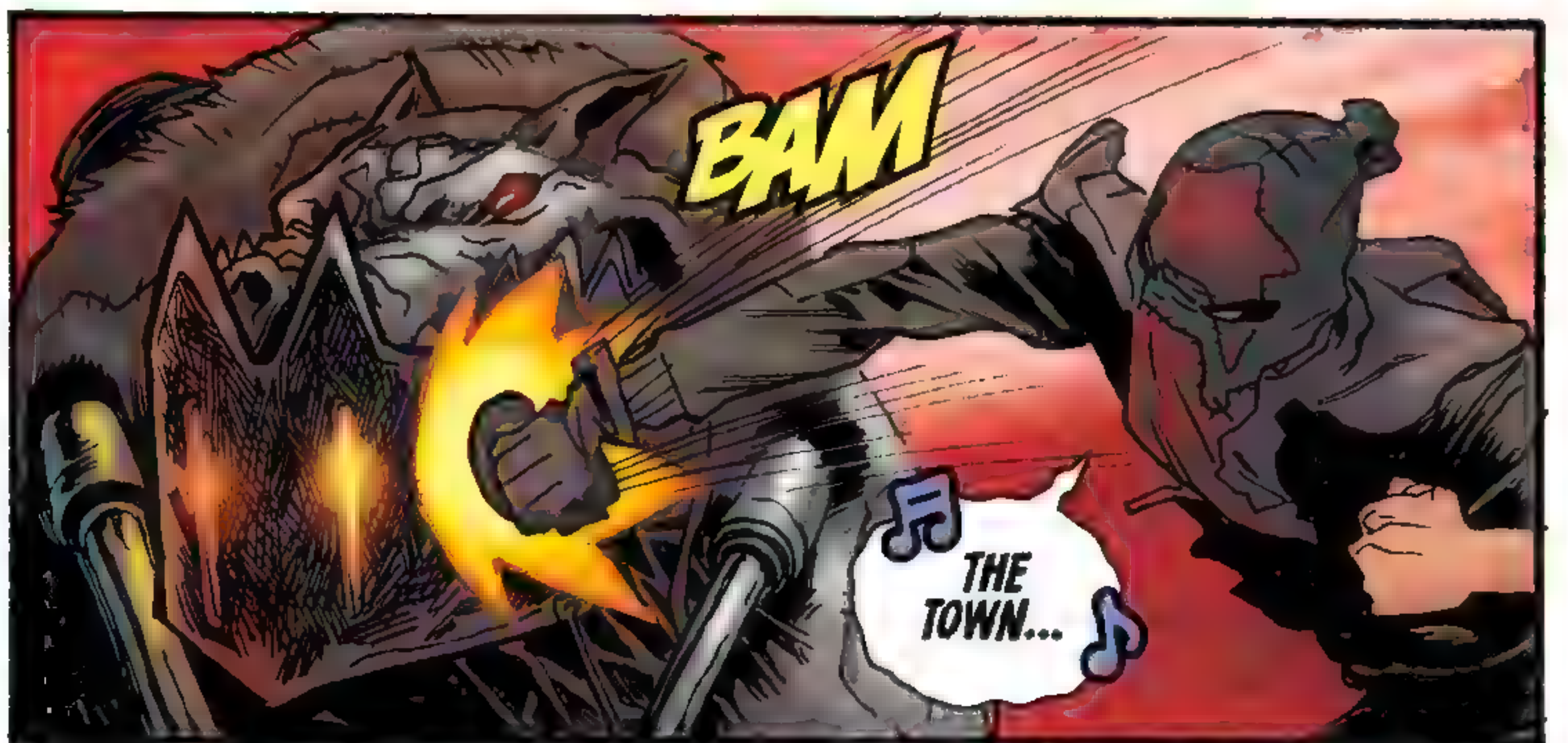
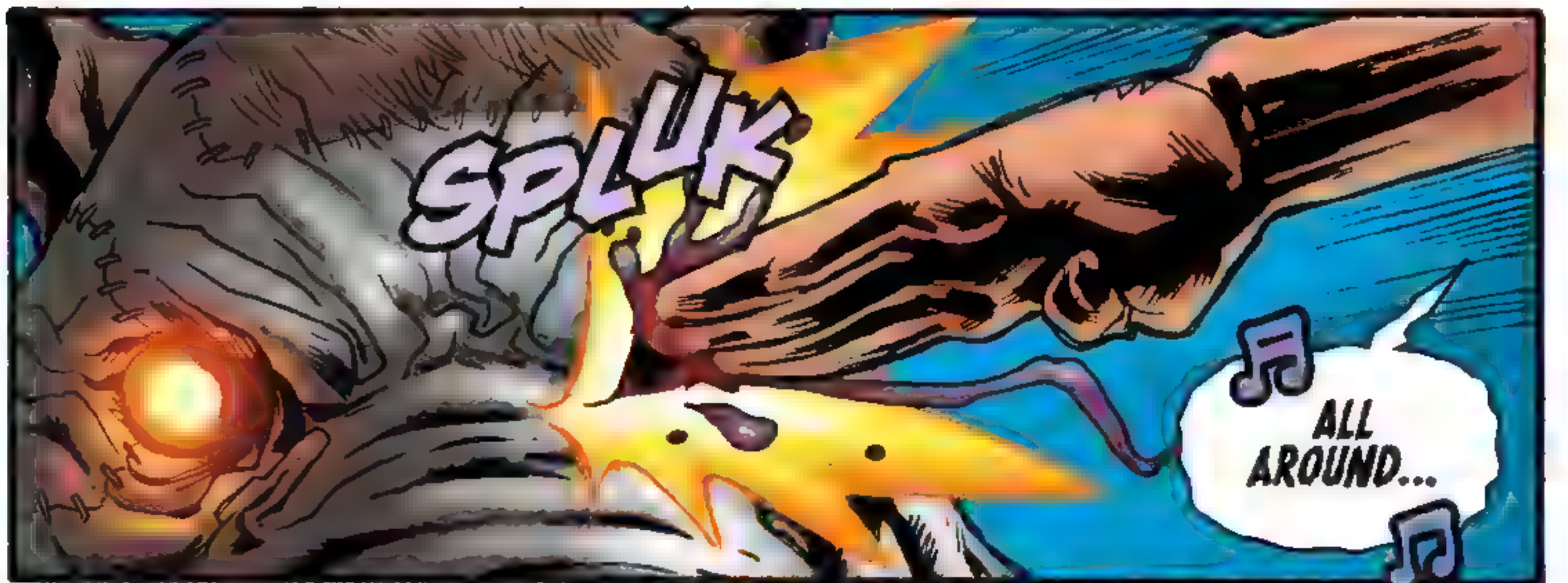
OPAL!

Uh-h  
LET ME  
GO!

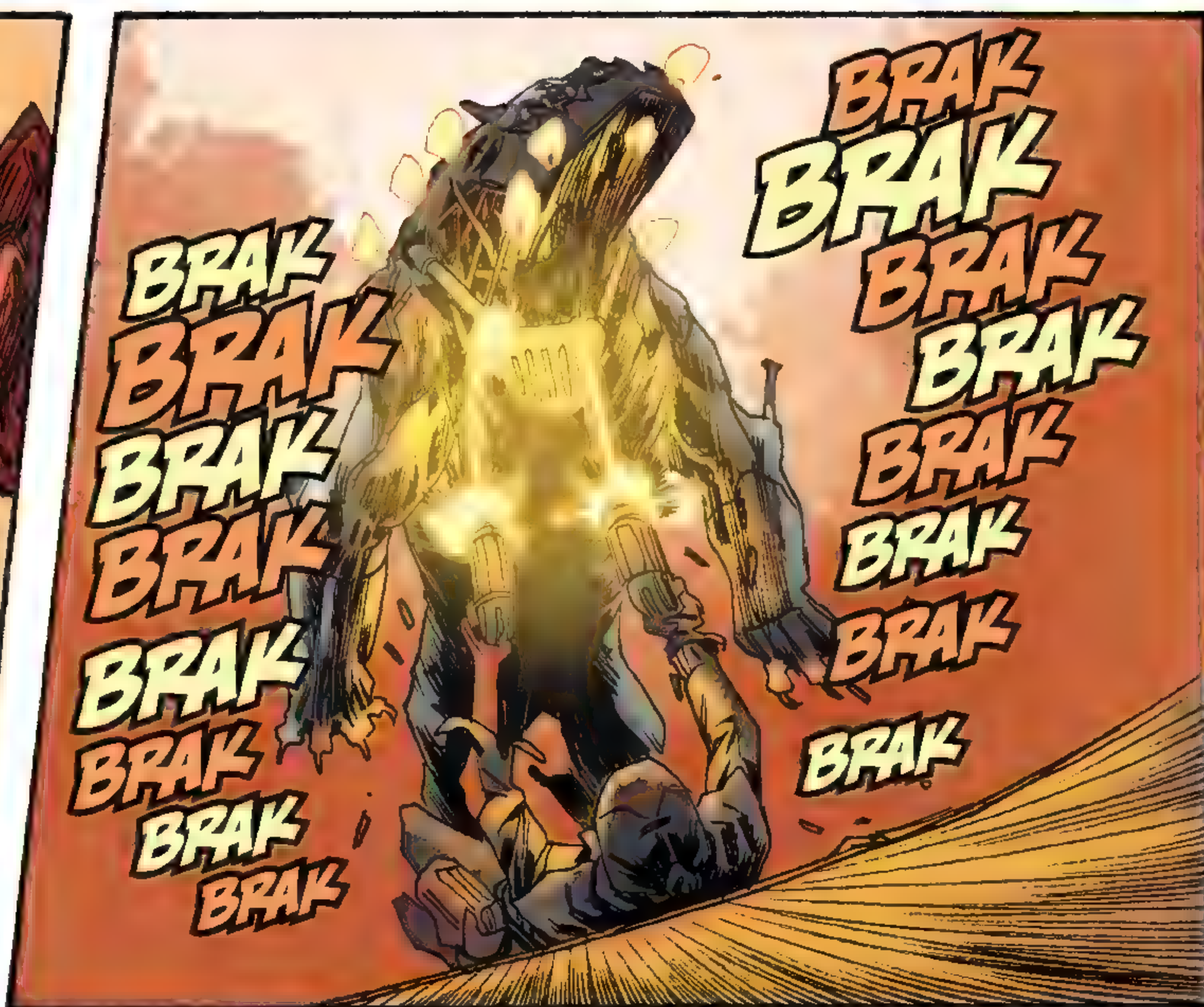
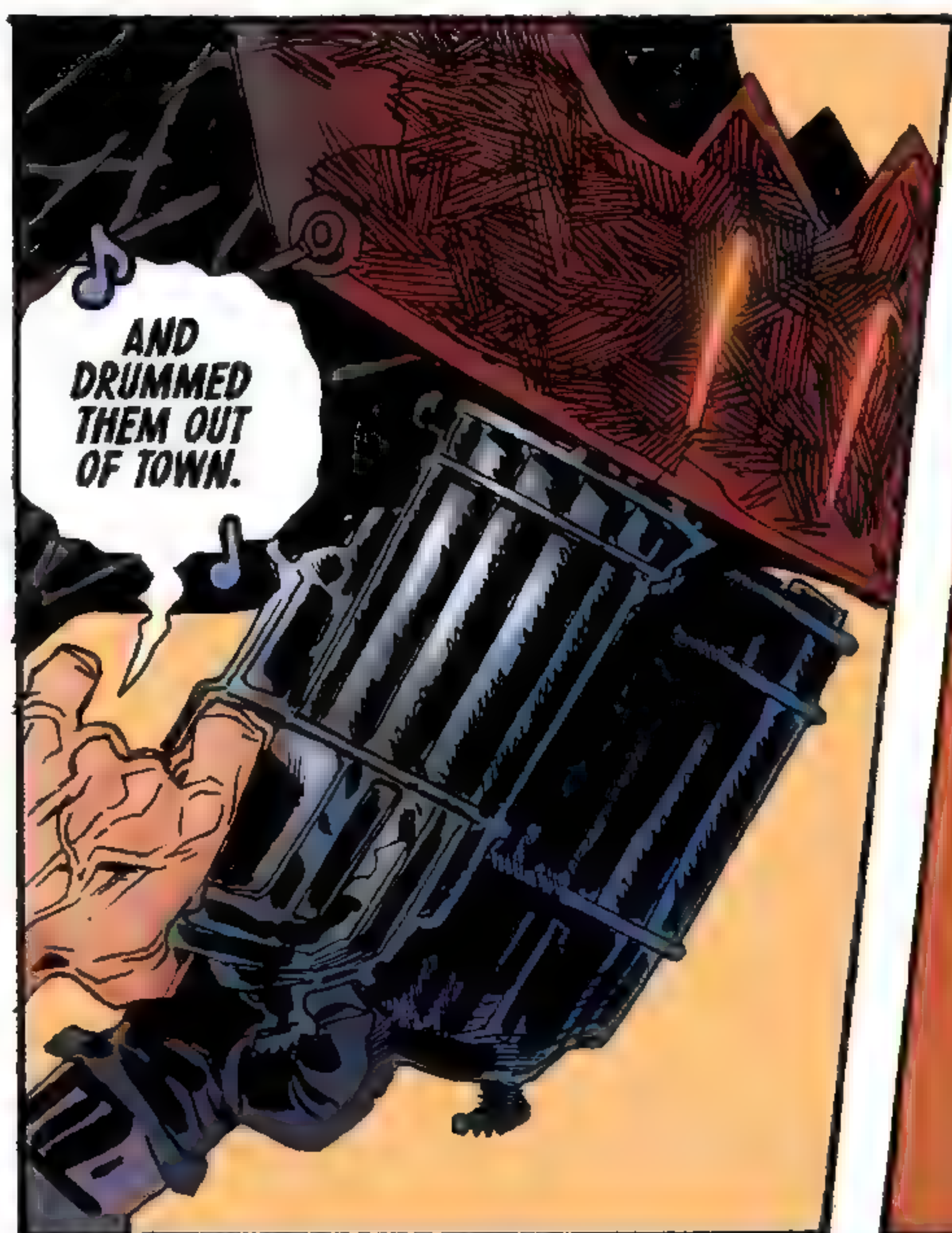
THERE'S  
NOTHING WE  
CAN DO! ONLY  
THE POWER OF  
THE MASK HAS  
ANY CHANCE TO  
DEFEAT THAT  
BEAST!











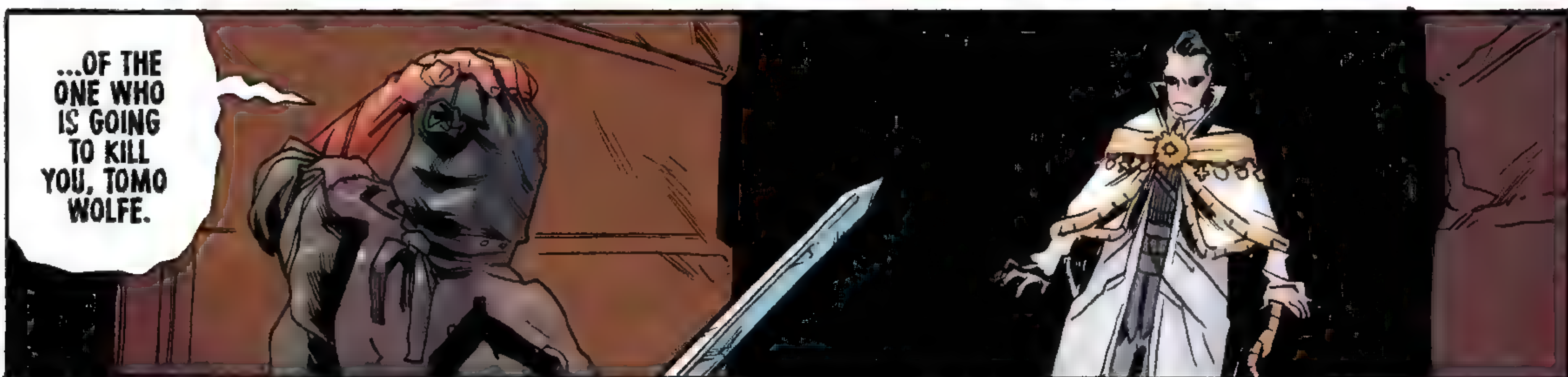
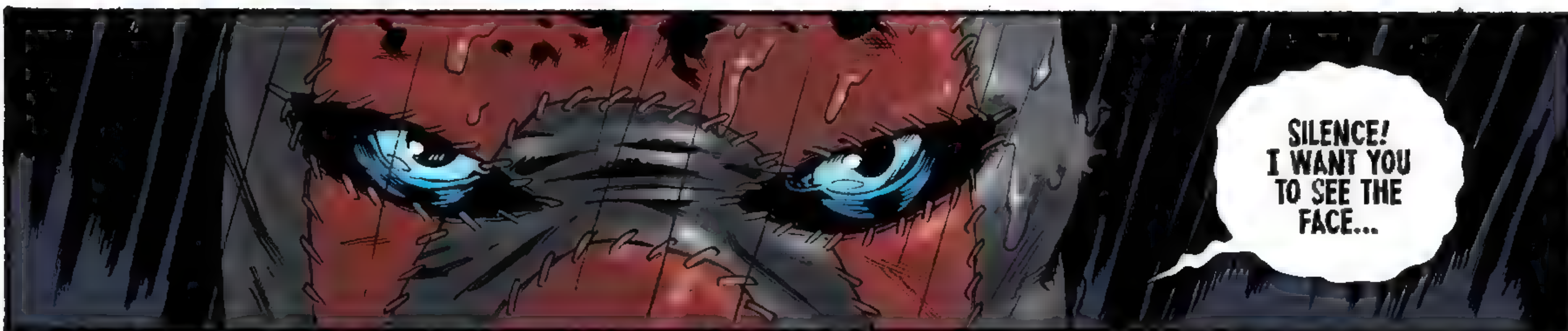


...NOW!


RRRAHH

SWOOSH









YES. I  
HAVE ALWAYS  
BEEN THE  
**REAL** GENERAL  
CHINA.

"WHEN MY TRUE  
LOVE, CHINA, WAS  
KILLED, KIMATHI  
AND I COULD  
NOT ACCEPT THAT  
HE WAS GONE.

"SO I  
ASSUMED  
HIS NAME  
AND HIS  
ROLE.


"PROVIDER.

"PROTECTOR.

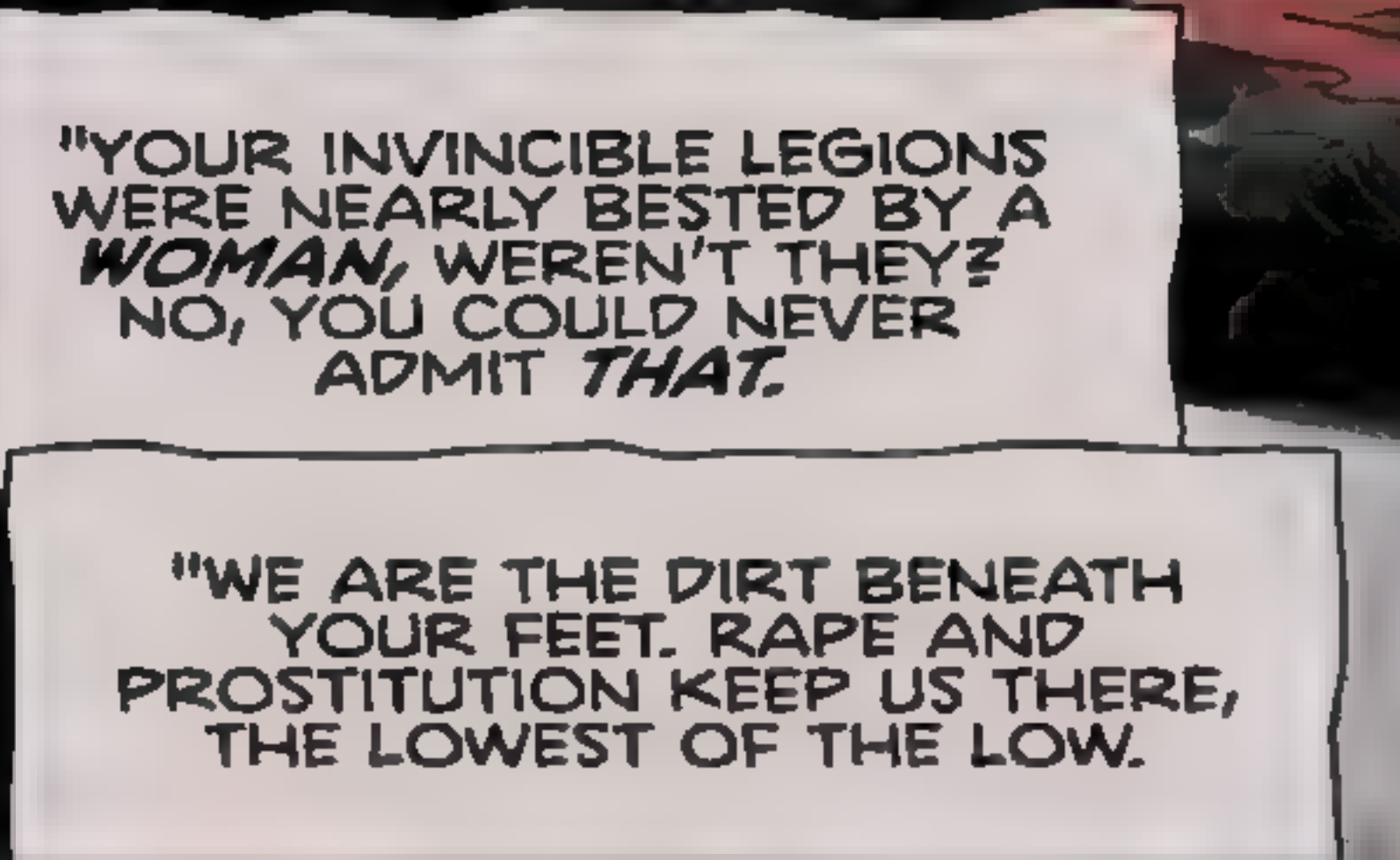
"UNTIL I  
BECAME  
**THIS.**

"NO ONE WOULD ACCEPT A **WOMAN**  
AS LEADER OF A CLANDESTINE REBELLION,  
SO I--OPAL--HID UNDER THIS MASK.  
AND **GENERAL CHINA** I BECAME.






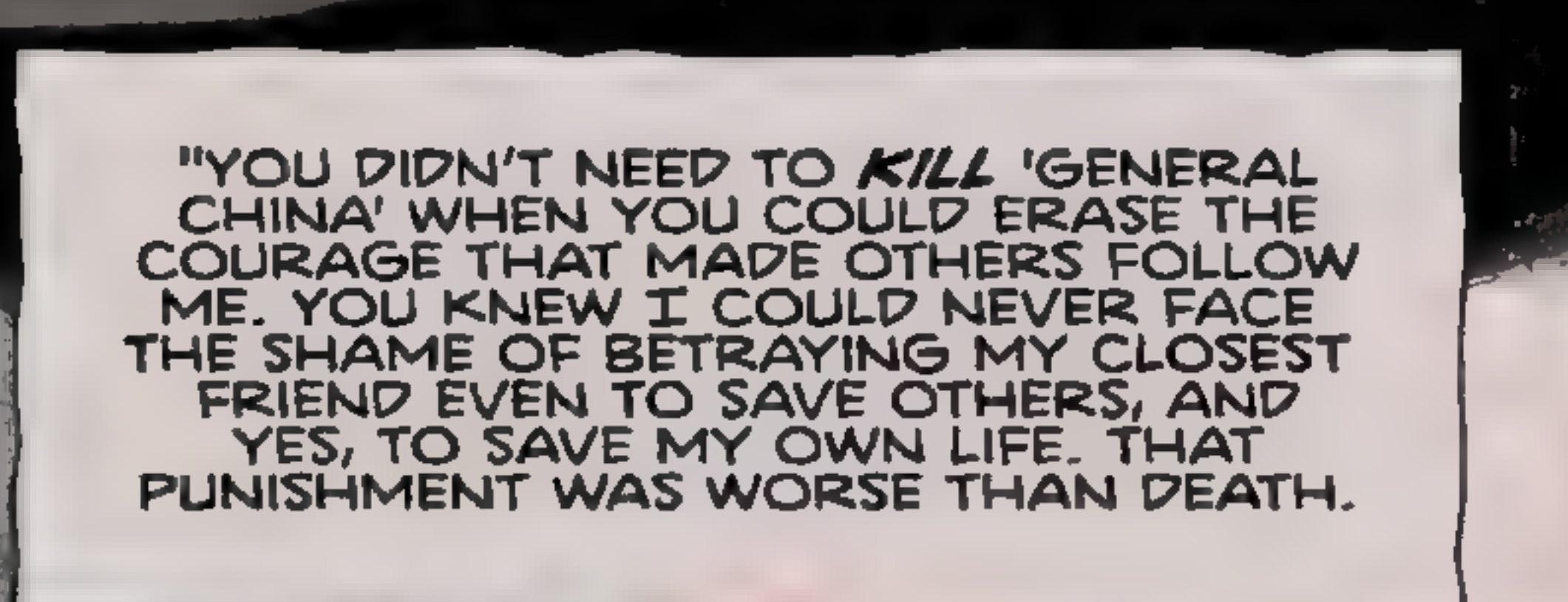
"WE HAVE BOTH  
KEPT MY IDENTITY  
A SECRET FOR OUR  
OWN REASONS,  
HAVEN'T WE,  
TOMO WOLFE?"



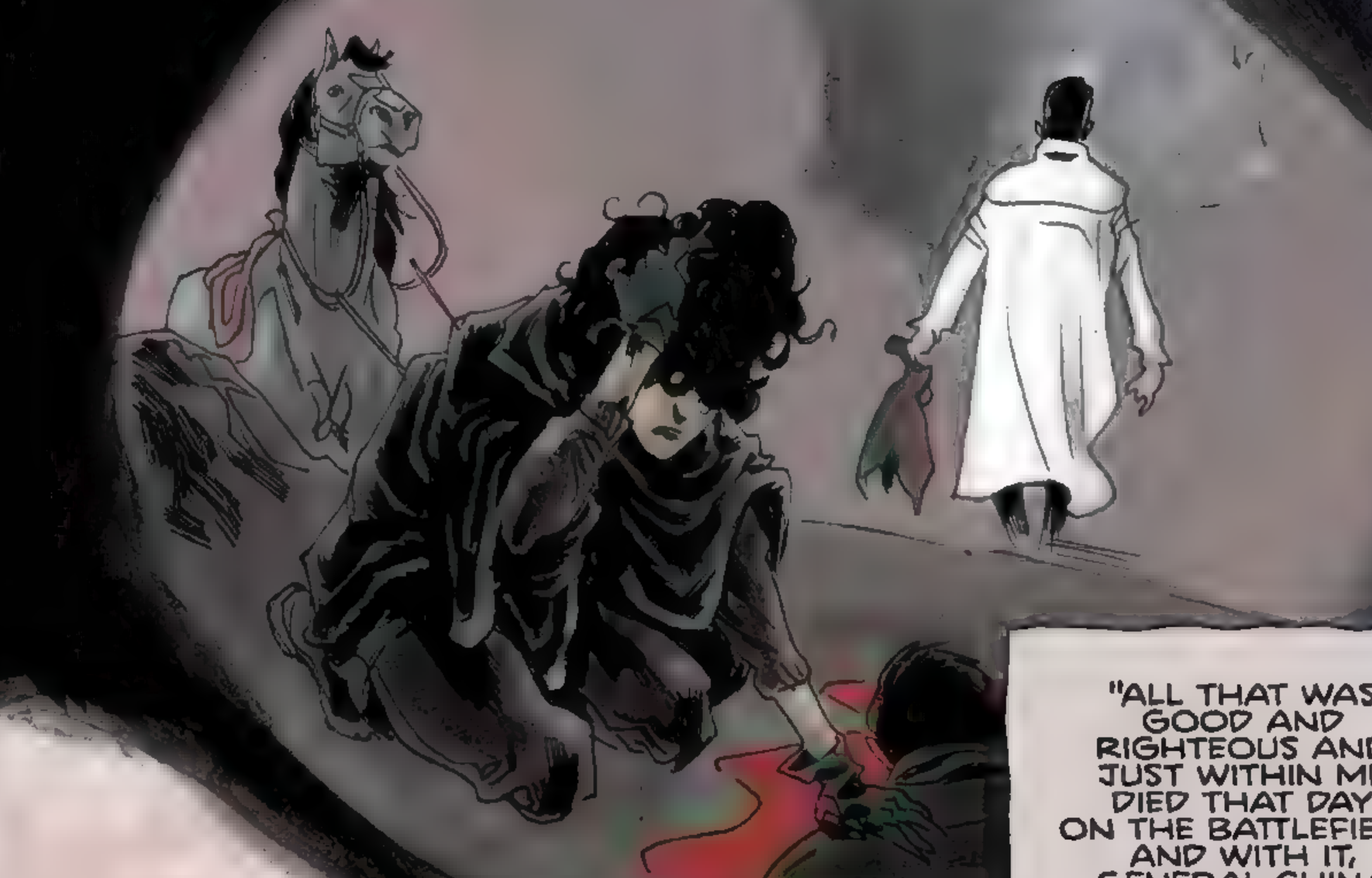
"YOUR INVINCIBLE LEGIONS  
WERE NEARLY BESTED BY A  
*WOMAN*, WEREN'T THEY?  
NO, YOU COULD NEVER  
ADMIT *THAT*."



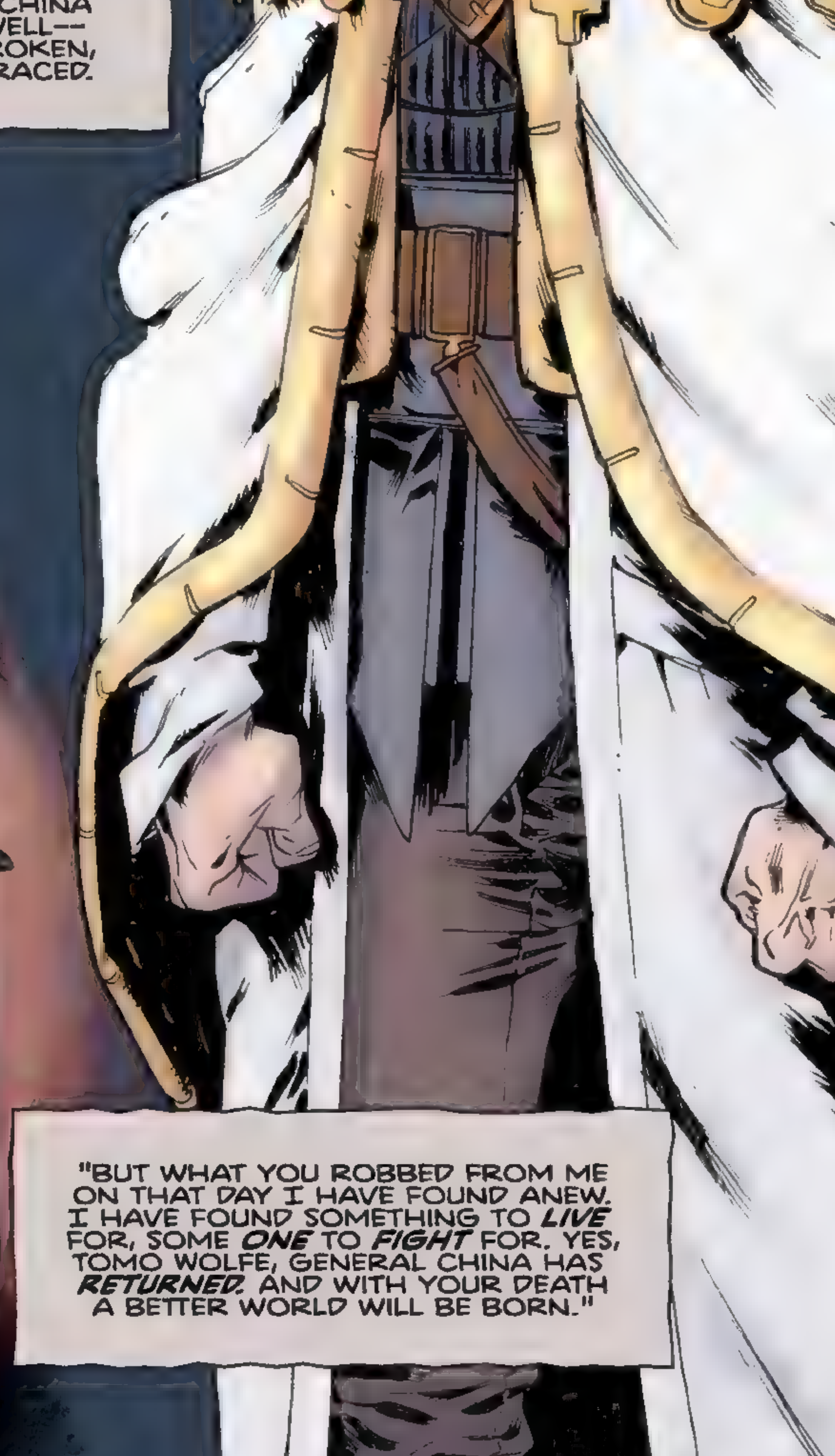
"WE ARE THE DIRT BENEATH  
YOUR FEET. RAPE AND  
PROSTITUTION KEEP US THERE,  
THE LOWEST OF THE LOW."



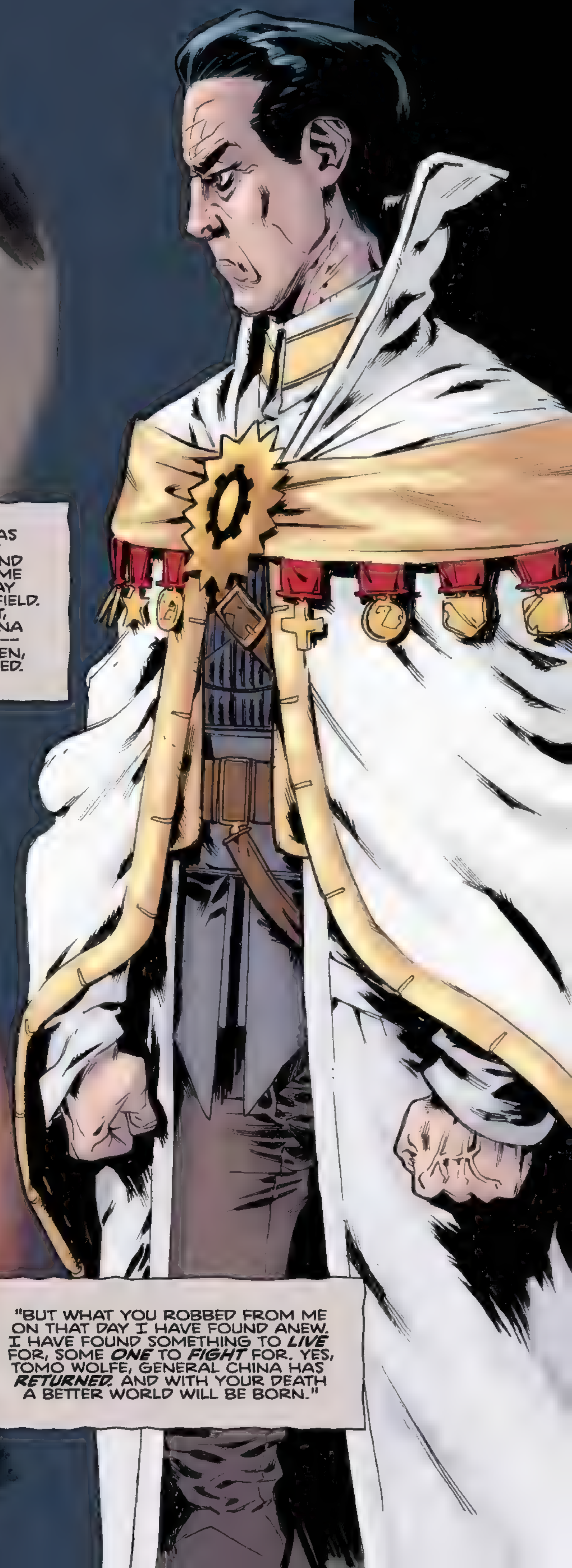
"YOU DIDN'T NEED TO *KILL* 'GENERAL  
CHINA' WHEN YOU COULD ERASE THE  
COURAGE THAT MADE OTHERS FOLLOW  
ME. YOU KNEW I COULD NEVER FACE  
THE SHAME OF BETRAYING MY CLOSEST  
FRIEND EVEN TO SAVE OTHERS, AND  
YES, TO SAVE MY OWN LIFE. THAT  
PUNISHMENT WAS WORSE THAN DEATH."



"ALL THAT WAS  
GOOD AND  
RIGHTEOUS AND  
JUST WITHIN ME  
DIED THAT DAY  
ON THE BATTLEFIELD.  
AND WITH IT,  
GENERAL CHINA  
DIED AS WELL—  
ALONE, BROKEN,  
AND DISGRACED."



"BUT WHAT YOU ROBBED FROM ME  
ON THAT DAY I HAVE FOUND ANEW.  
I HAVE FOUND SOMETHING TO *LIVE*  
FOR, SOME *ONE TO FIGHT* FOR. YES,  
TOMO WOLFE, GENERAL CHINA HAS  
*RETURNED*. AND WITH YOUR DEATH  
A BETTER WORLD WILL BE BORN."







ALL YOUR  
HOPE IS VANITY.  
AND IN THE END  
YOU HAVE BEEN  
UNDONE BY  
YOUR PRIDE.



SMUG  
TO THE LAST!  
IT IS *YOU*  
WHO WILL  
BE—



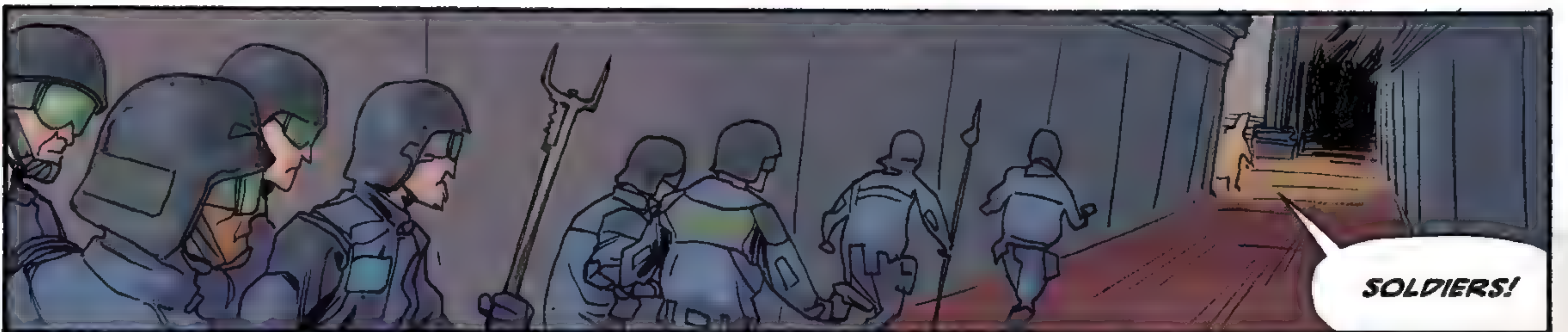
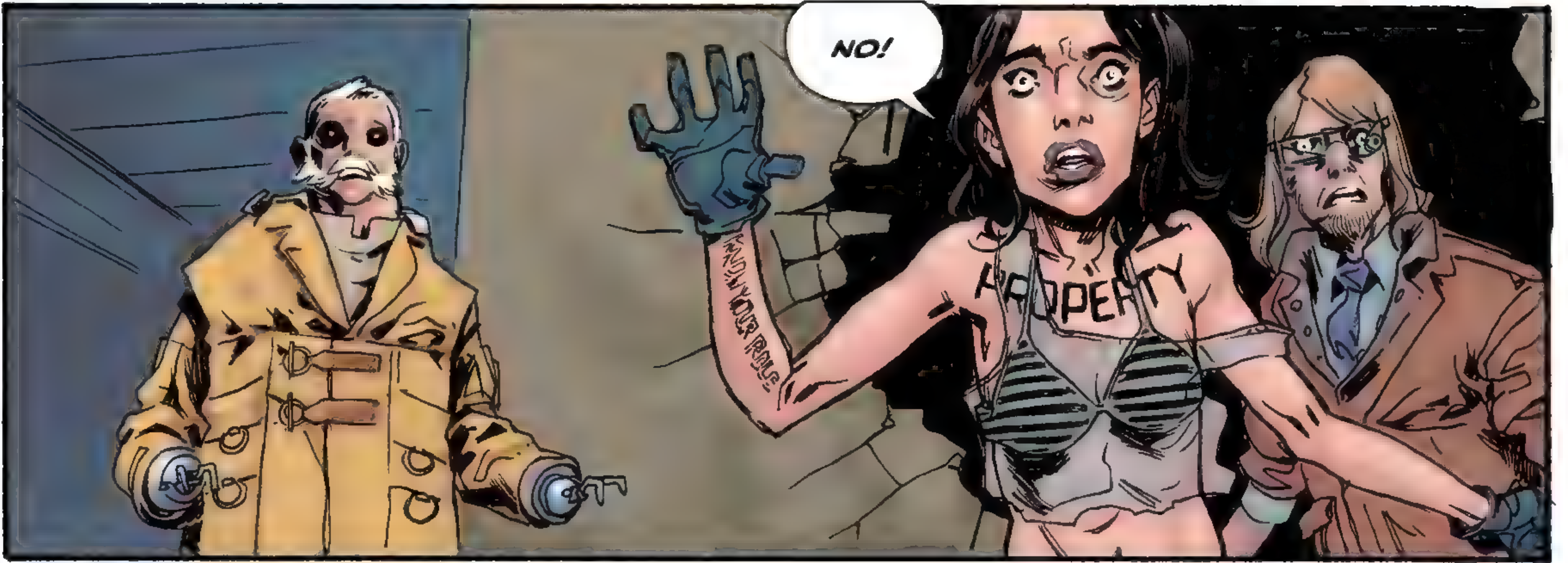
*OPAL!*  
LOOK  
OUT!

**SHHHH!**

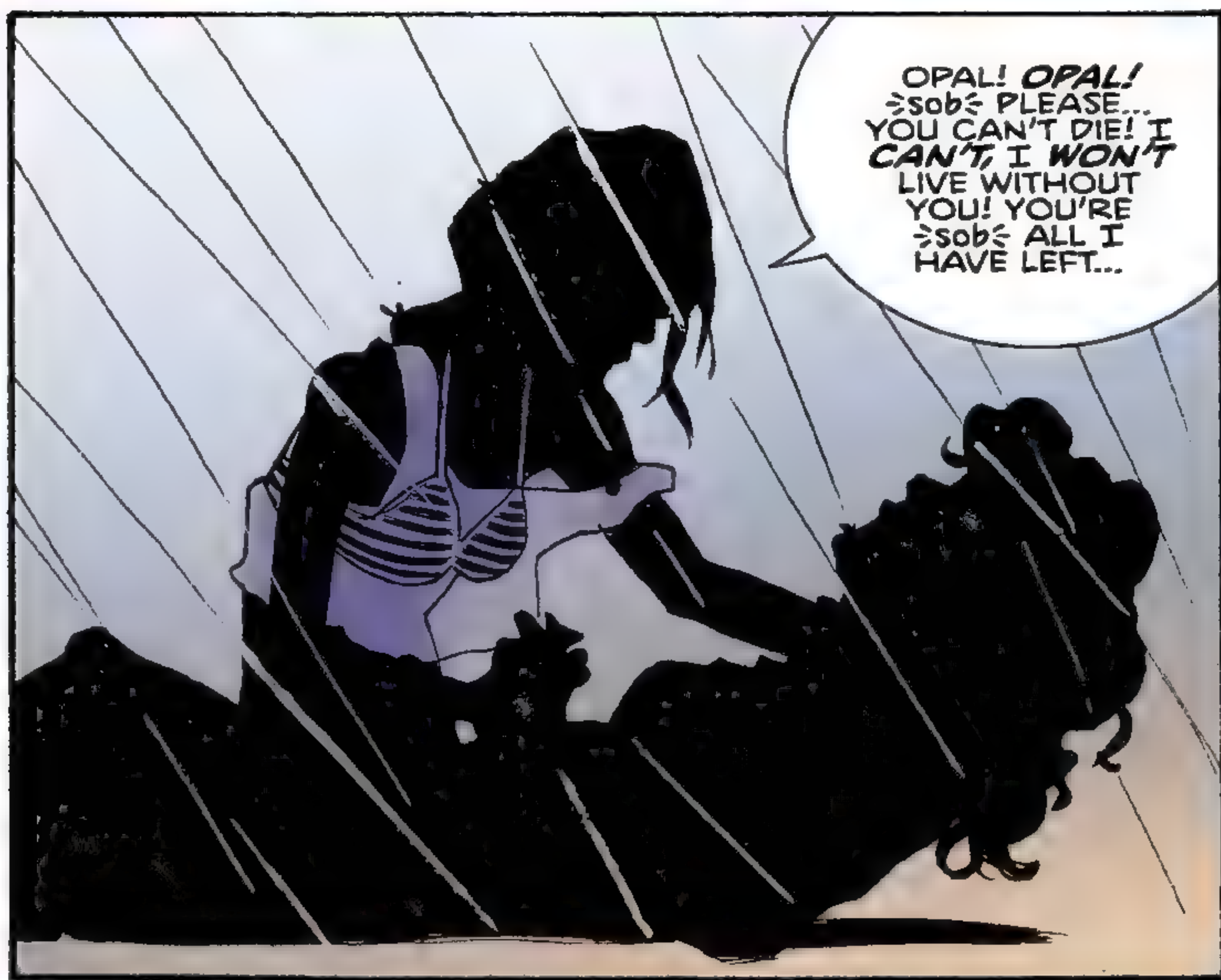


*GAAHH!*





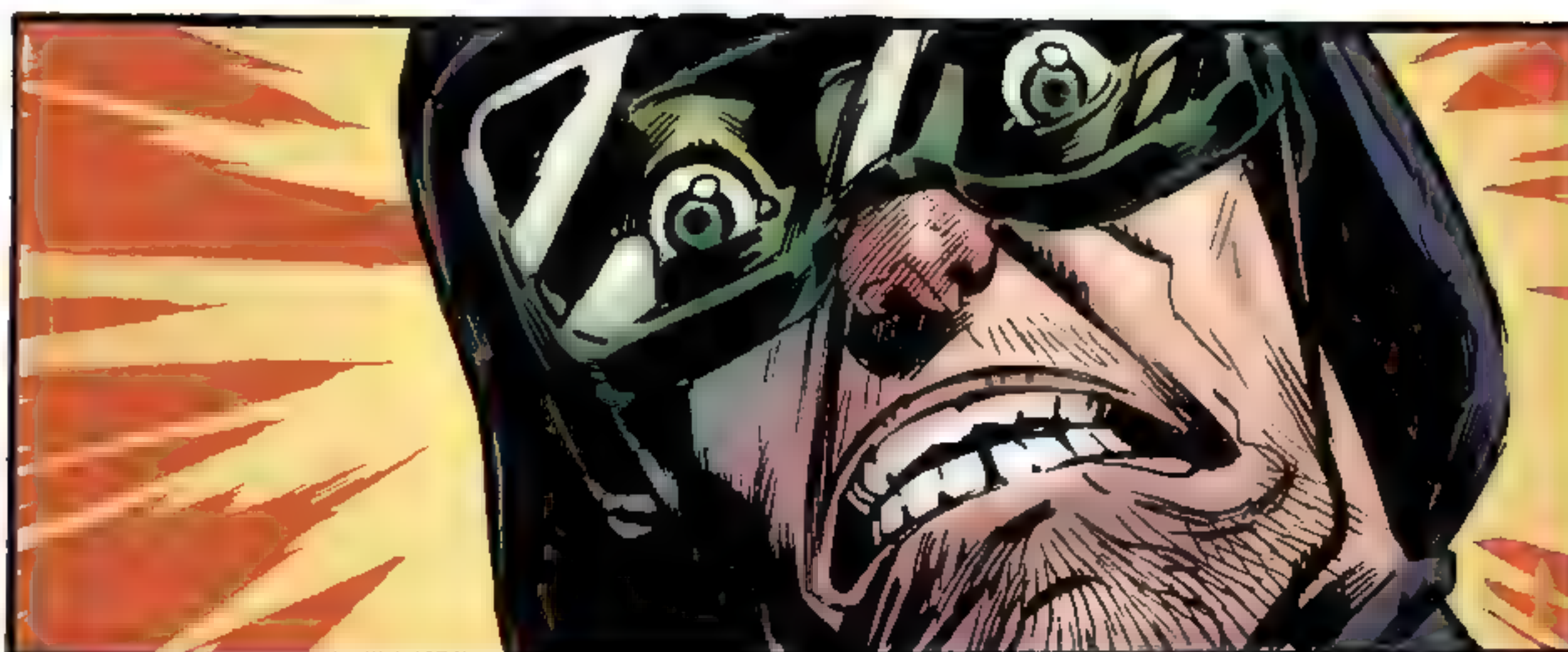
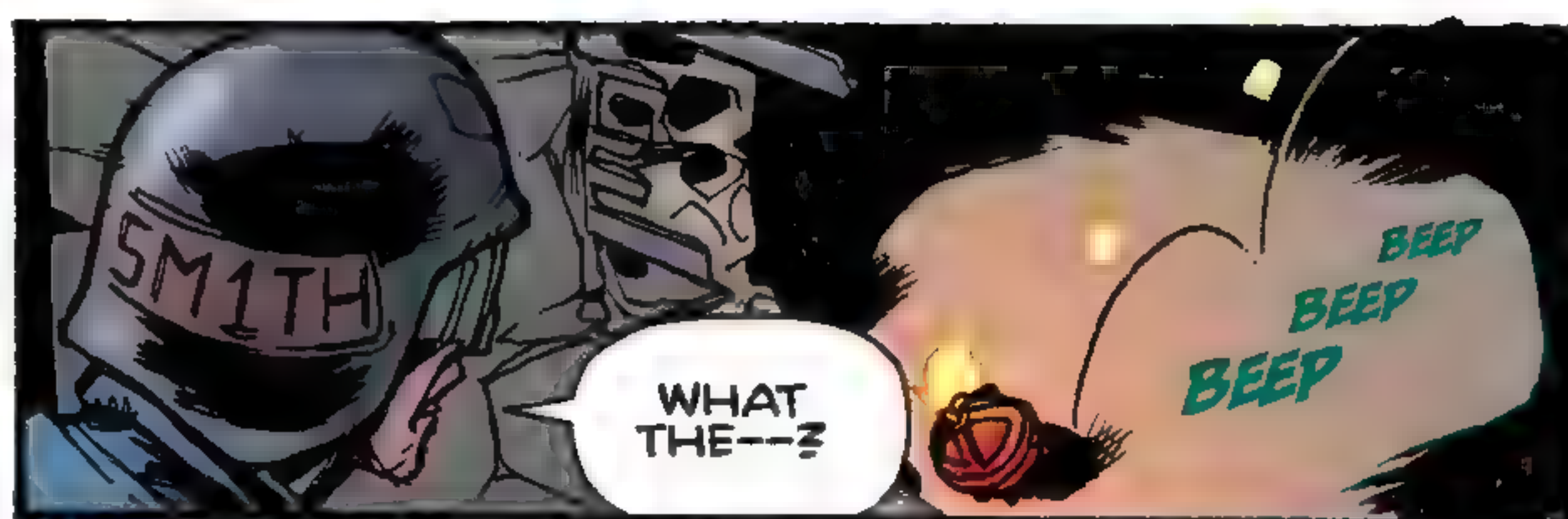




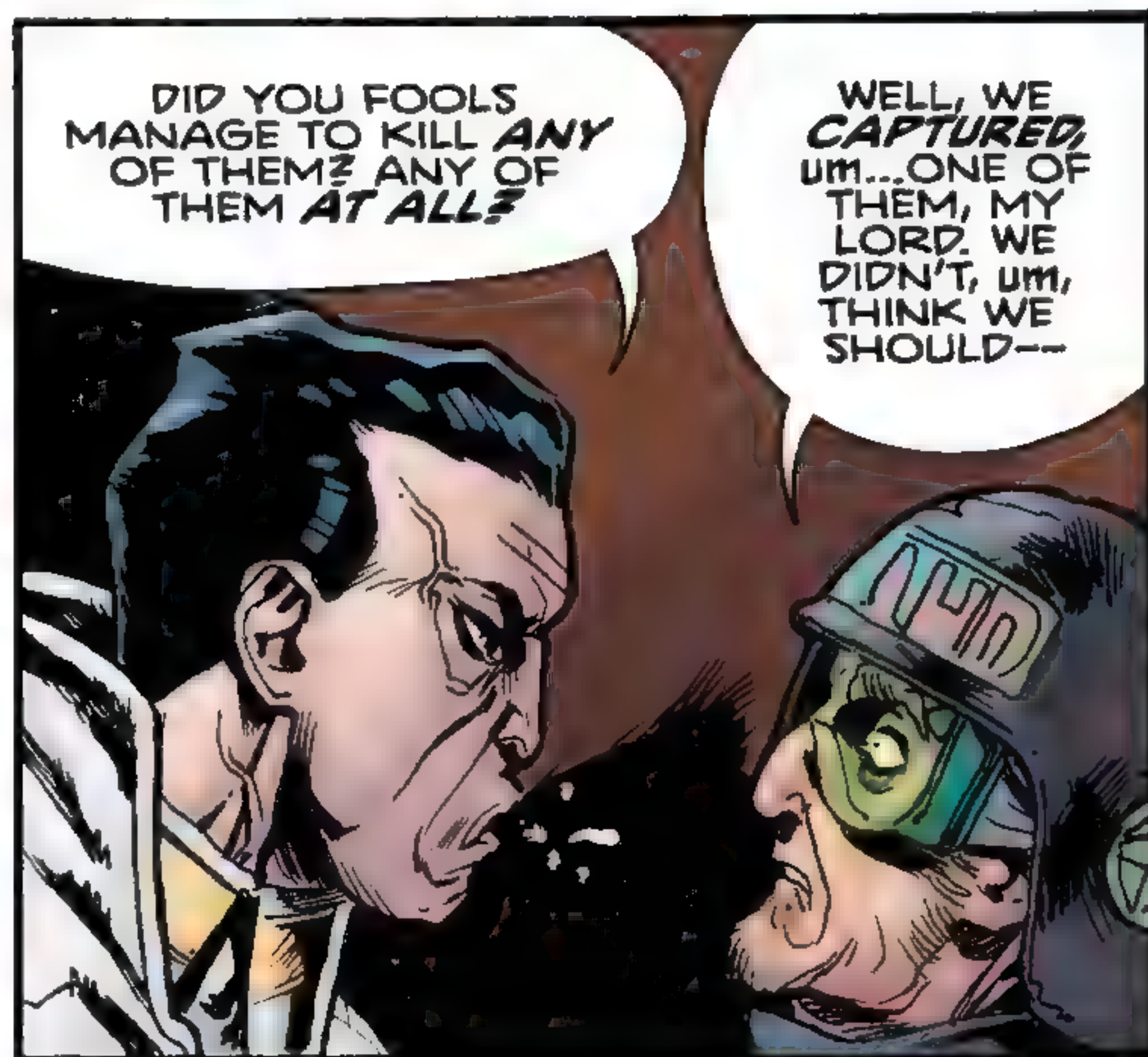
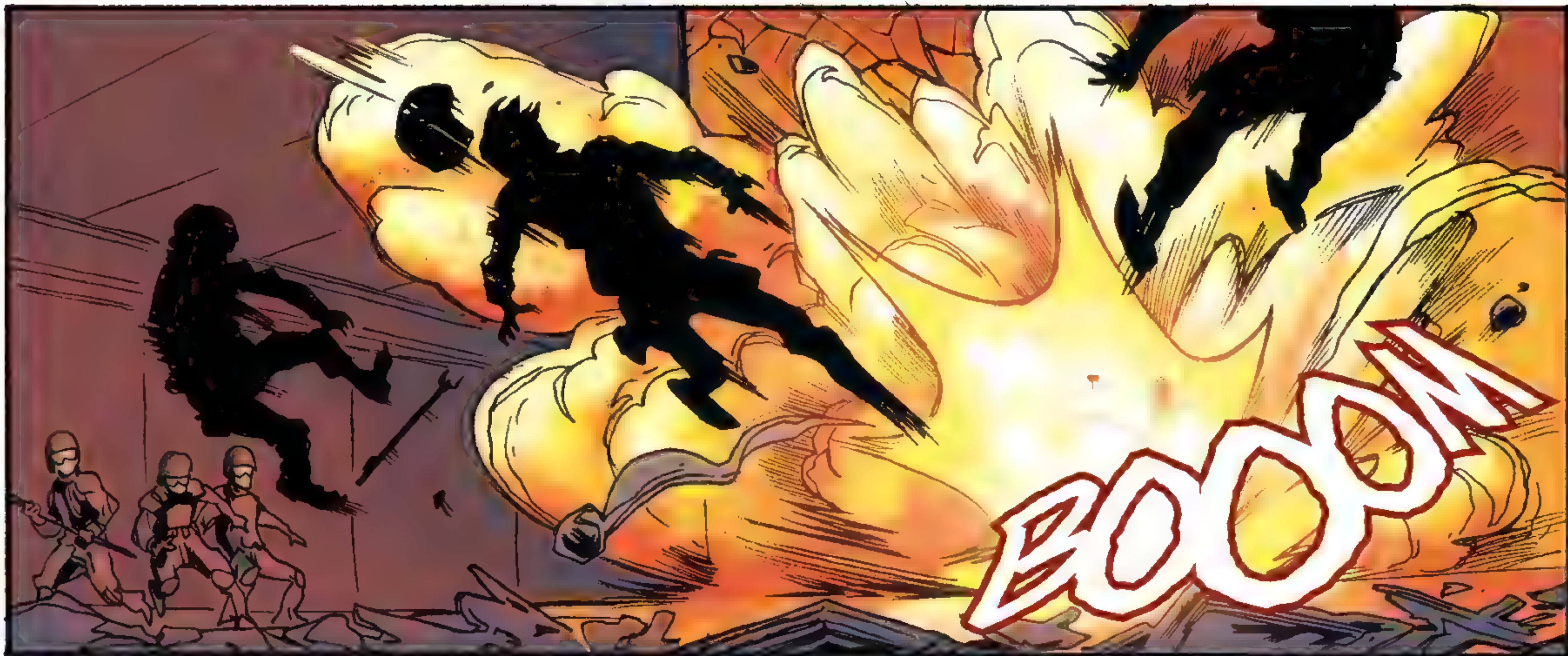




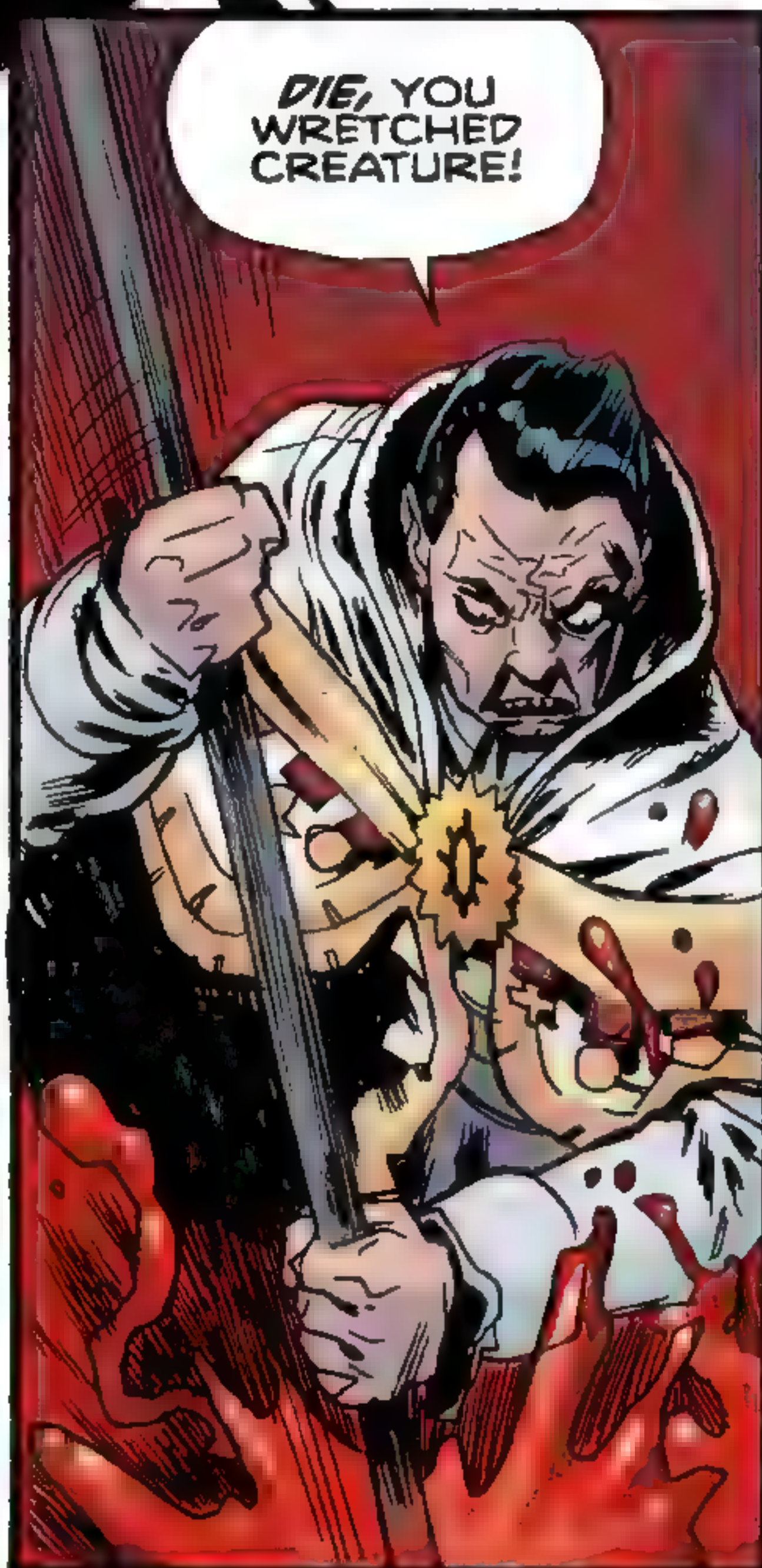
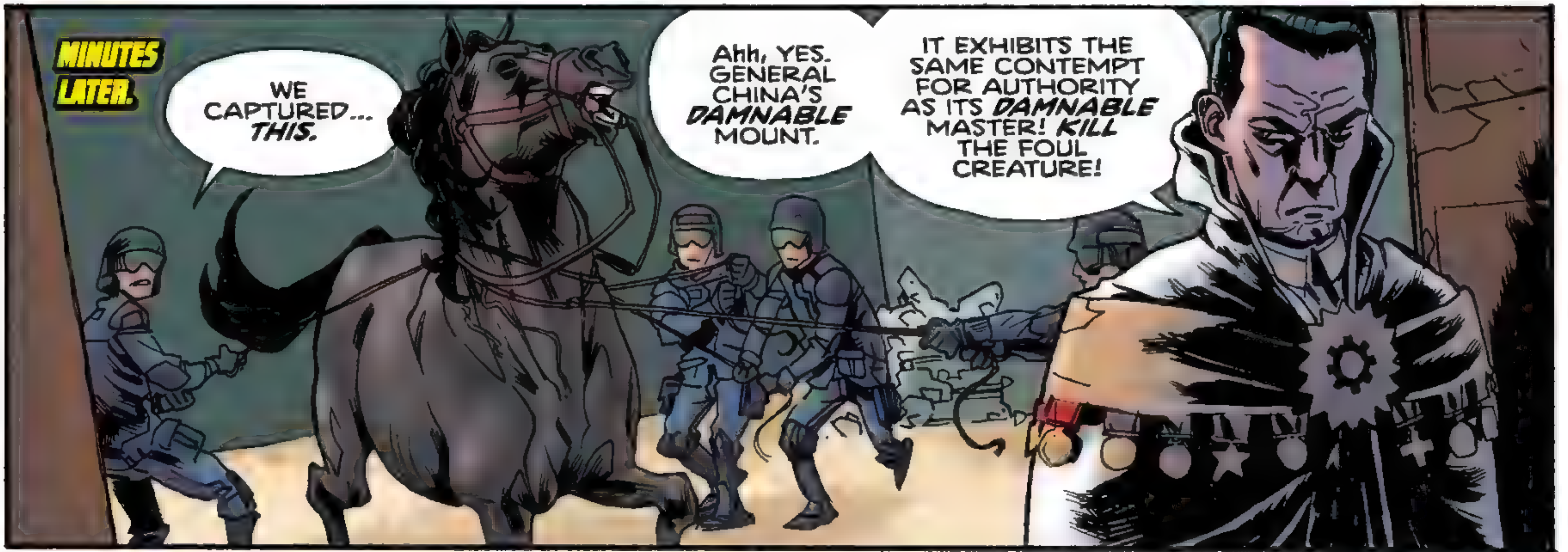




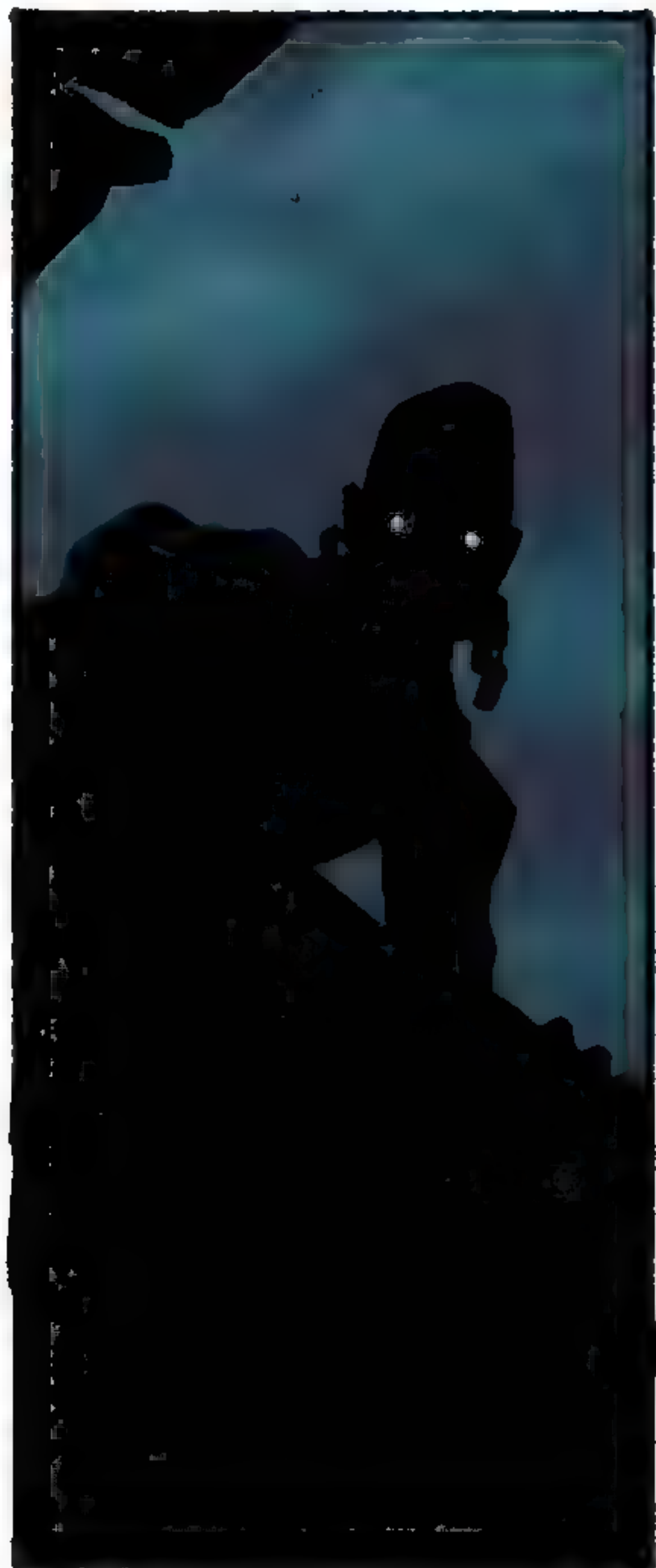
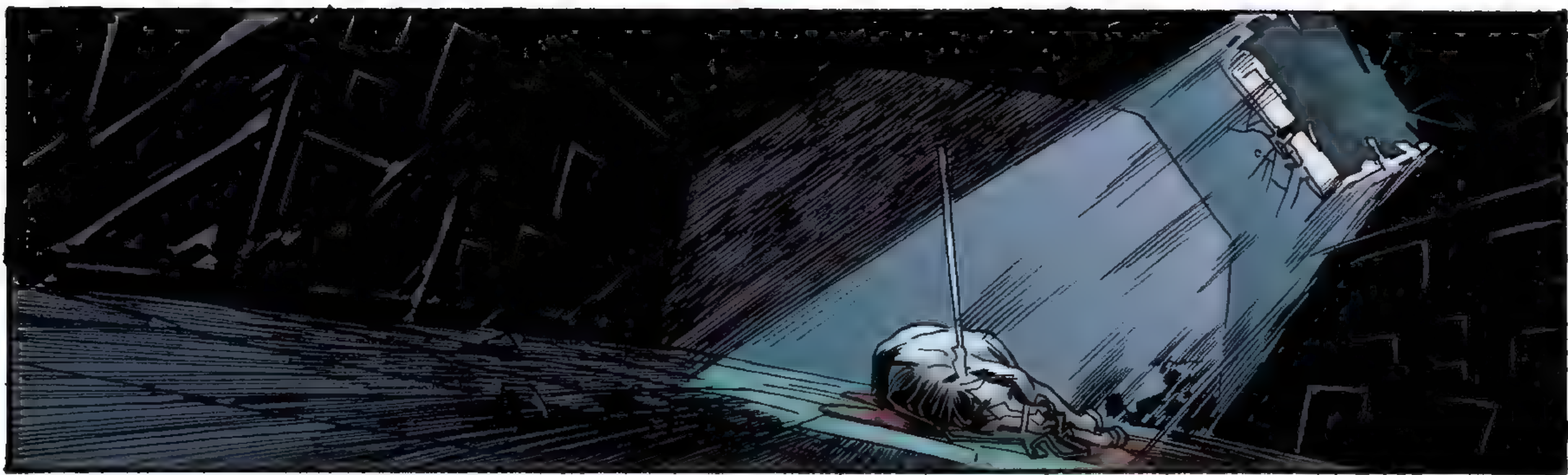


















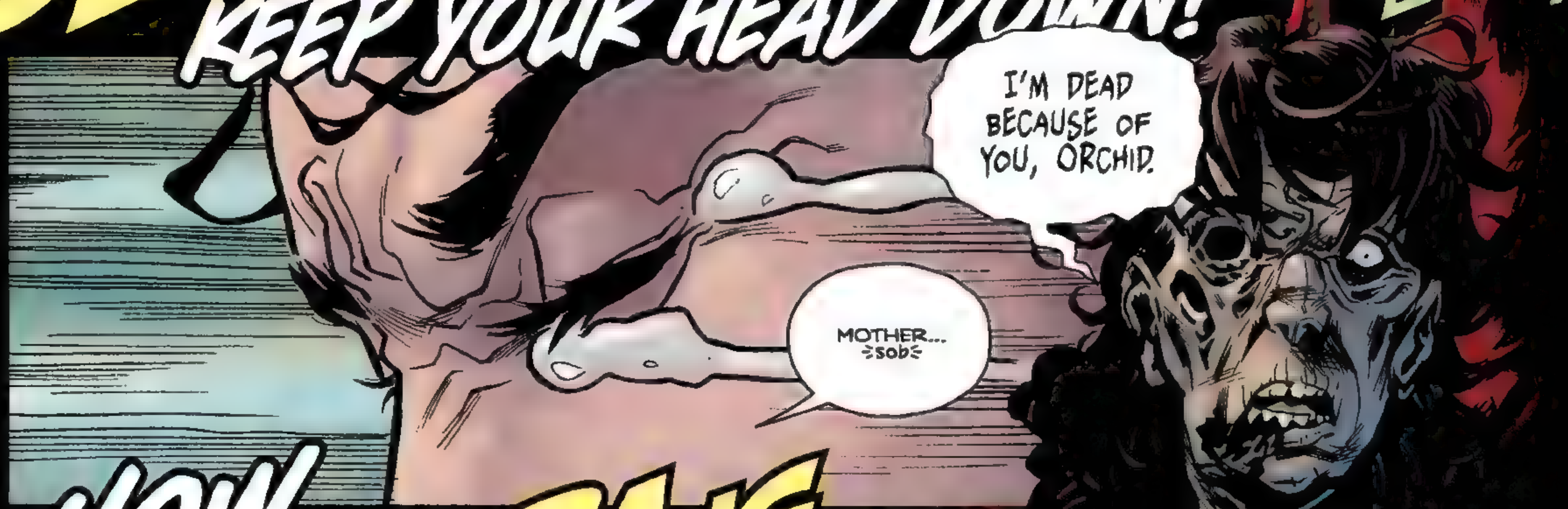








**BLAM BLAM BLAM GALLOP GALLOP**  
**KEEP YOUR HEAD DOWN!**



I'M DEAD  
BECAUSE OF  
YOU, ORCHID.

MOTHER...  
~sob~

**HOW MANY? BANG**  
**RANG** THE  
SPIDERS  
ARE GAINING!

**GALLOP GALLOP**

YOU SAID  
YOU WOULD PROTECT  
ME, ORCHID...AND  
YOU DIDN'T.

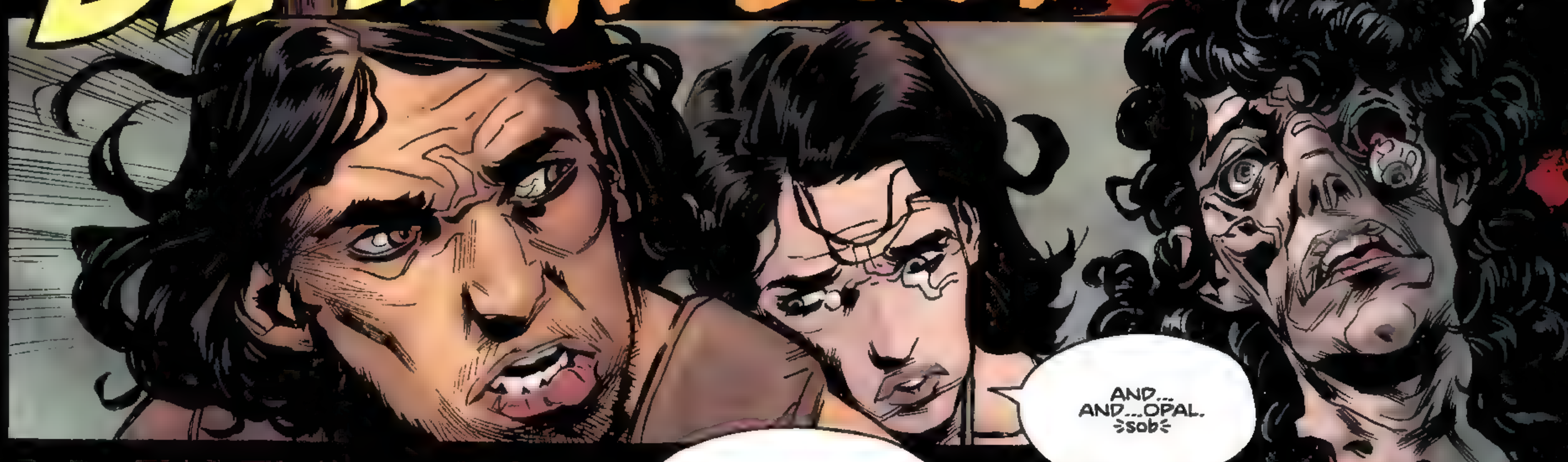


~sob~  
YEHZU.  
~sob~

**GET TO  
THE TREE LINE!**

**BLAM BLAM KABOOM**

IT WAS YOU  
WHO LED ME TO MY  
DEATH, ORCHID. IT WAS  
ALL YOUR FAULT.



AND...  
AND...OPAL.  
~sob~

NONE OF  
US COULD HAVE  
SAVED THEM,  
ORCHID! NOW,  
HOLD ON!





STEADY,  
SIMON! STAY  
CLOSE!

**BLAM BLAM  
BLAM**



CAN'T YOU GO  
ANY FASTER?  
THEY'RE ALMOST  
ON US!

I'M  
TRYING!



THIS  
SHOULD  
SLOW 'EM  
DOWN.



**KRAKK**

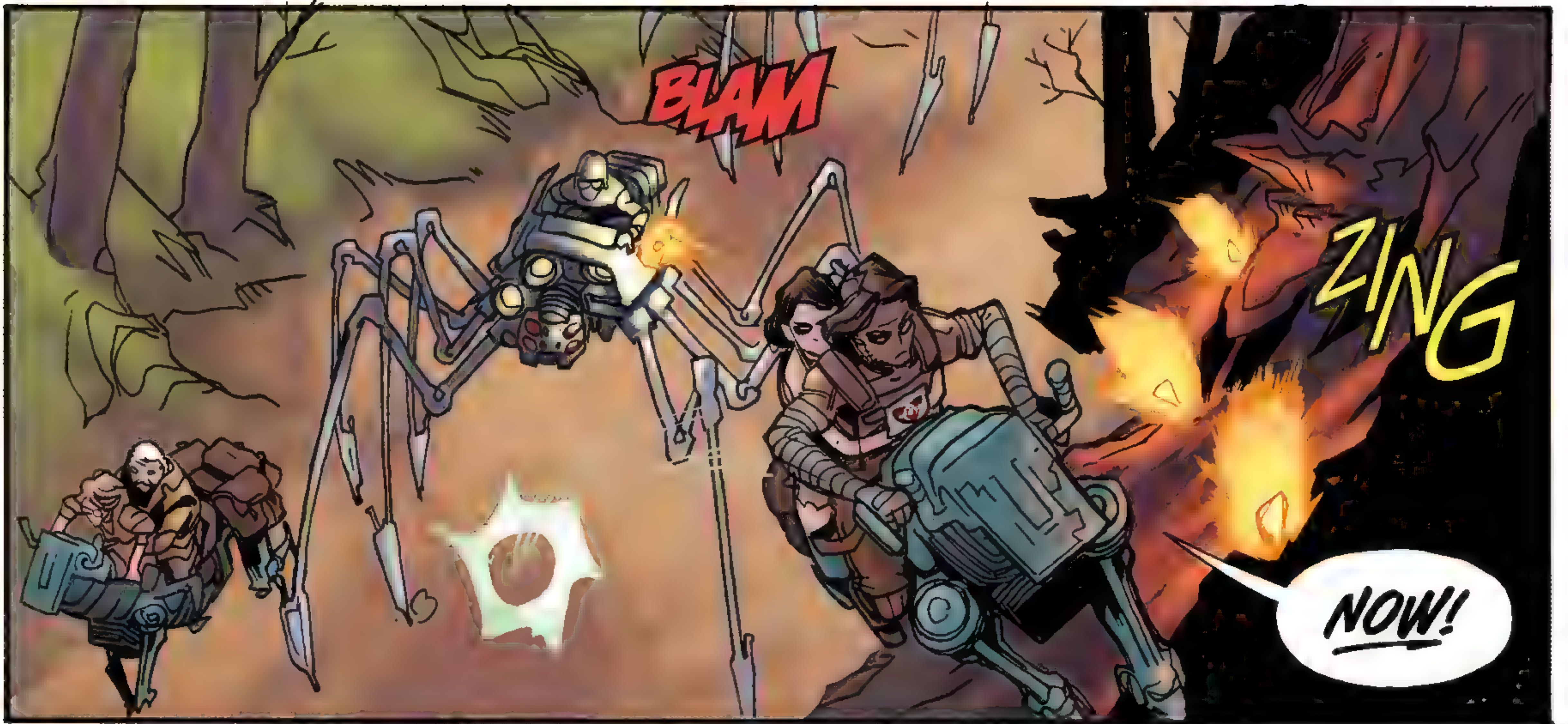


ON MY  
SIGNAL,  
SIMON...!

ANZIO,  
CAN WE SWITCH  
HORSES? I'M VERY  
UNCOMFORTABLE. DOES  
YOURS HAVE A SOFTER  
SADDLE? I'VE GOT  
BRUISES ALL OVER  
MY--

VEER  
RIGHT ON  
MY SIGNAL,  
SIMON!

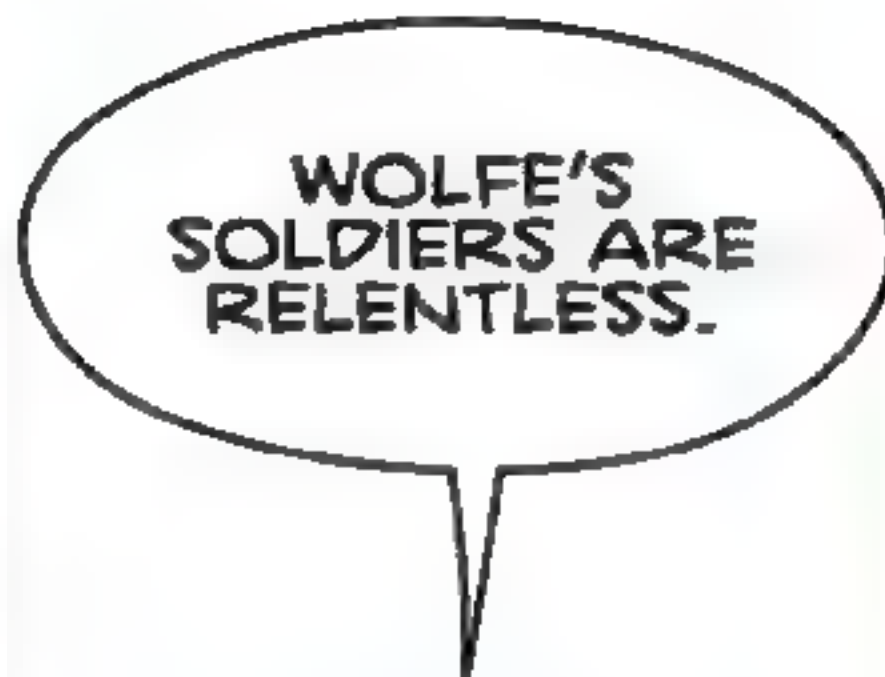








WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! THEY'RE GAINING ON US!



WOLFE'S SOLDIERS ARE RELENTLESS.



THEY WON'T STOP UNTIL SOMEONE STOPS THEM FOR GOOD!



MAYBE I UNDERESTIMATED OPAL. *SCOUGH* MAYBE I UNDERESTIMATED ALL OF YOU. SHE CARED ABOUT YOU ALL VERY MUCH.

I FELT THAT WAY ONCE--WHEN I FIRST FOUGHT FOR GENERAL CHINA. *SCOUGH* I HAD LOST SIGHT OF THAT. THERE IS NOTHING LEFT FOR ME BUT TO SEE YOU ALL TO SAFETY. NOW GO!



WESTIN! NO!

COME, SIMON. THERE'S NO GOING BACK! LET'S MAKE HIS SACRIFICE COUNT.

MAYBE HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT. DO YOU THINK HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT?



HE JUST MAY. NOW RIDE!









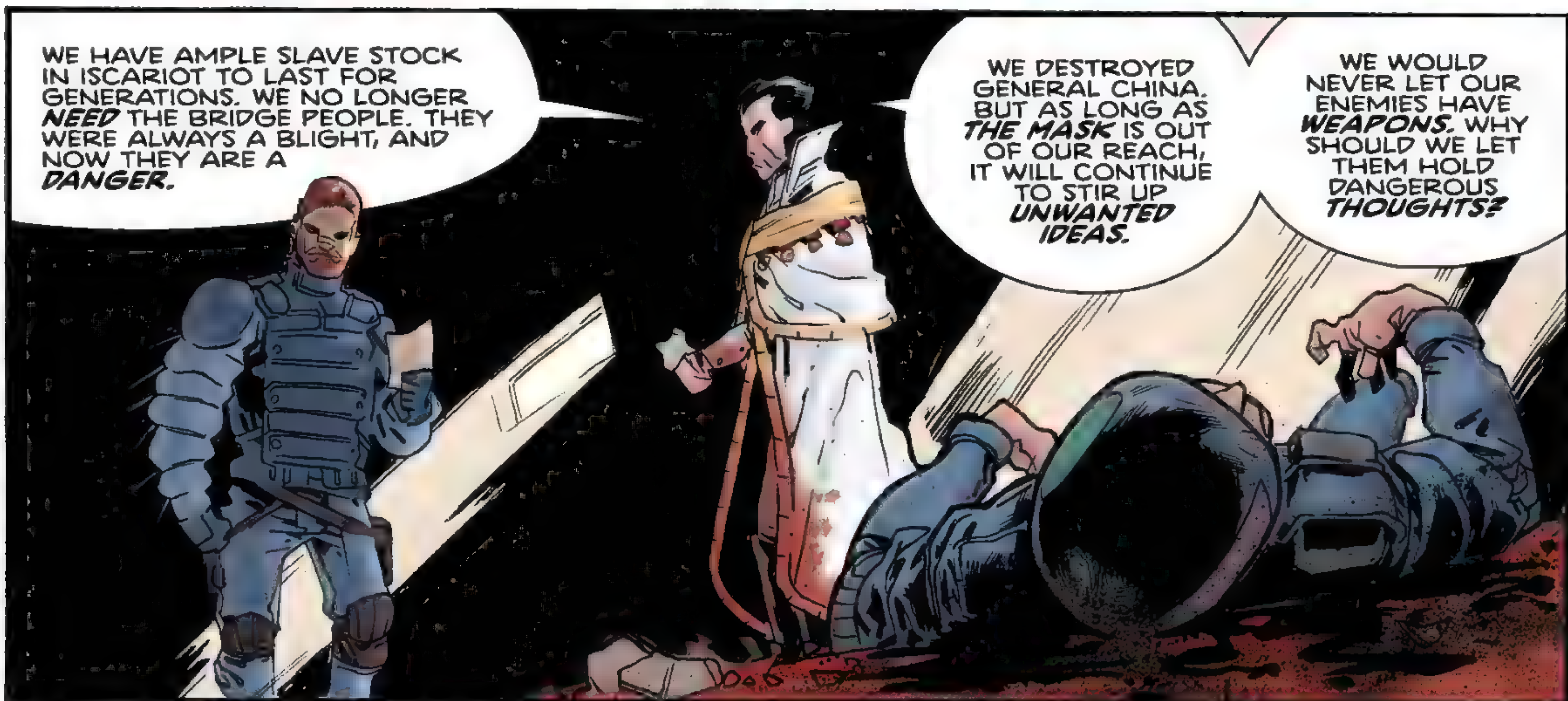




**SOON.**

...YES, YOU HEARD ME CORRECTLY. WE ARE GOING TO **EXTERMINATE** THE BRIDGE PEOPLE... EVERY MAN, EVERY WOMAN, AND EVERY CHILD!

WE MUST USE OUR **FULL** RESOURCES TO ELIMINATE THESE VERMIN ONCE AND FOR ALL.



WE HAVE AMPLE SLAVE STOCK IN ISCARIOT TO LAST FOR GENERATIONS. WE NO LONGER **NEED** THE BRIDGE PEOPLE. THEY WERE ALWAYS A BLIGHT, AND NOW THEY ARE A **DANGER**.

WE DESTROYED GENERAL CHINA. BUT AS LONG AS **THE MASK** IS OUT OF OUR REACH, IT WILL CONTINUE TO STIR UP **UNWANTED IDEAS**.

WE WOULD NEVER LET OUR ENEMIES HAVE **WEAPONS**. WHY SHOULD WE LET THEM HOLD **DANGEROUS THOUGHTS?**



BUT A DANGER RECOGNIZED IS A DANGER DEFEATED! THOSE WHO TODAY ARE SQUEAMISH WILL THANK US TOMORROW ON BENDED KNEES BECAUSE WE COURAGEOUSLY AND FIRMLY TOOK ON THIS TASK.

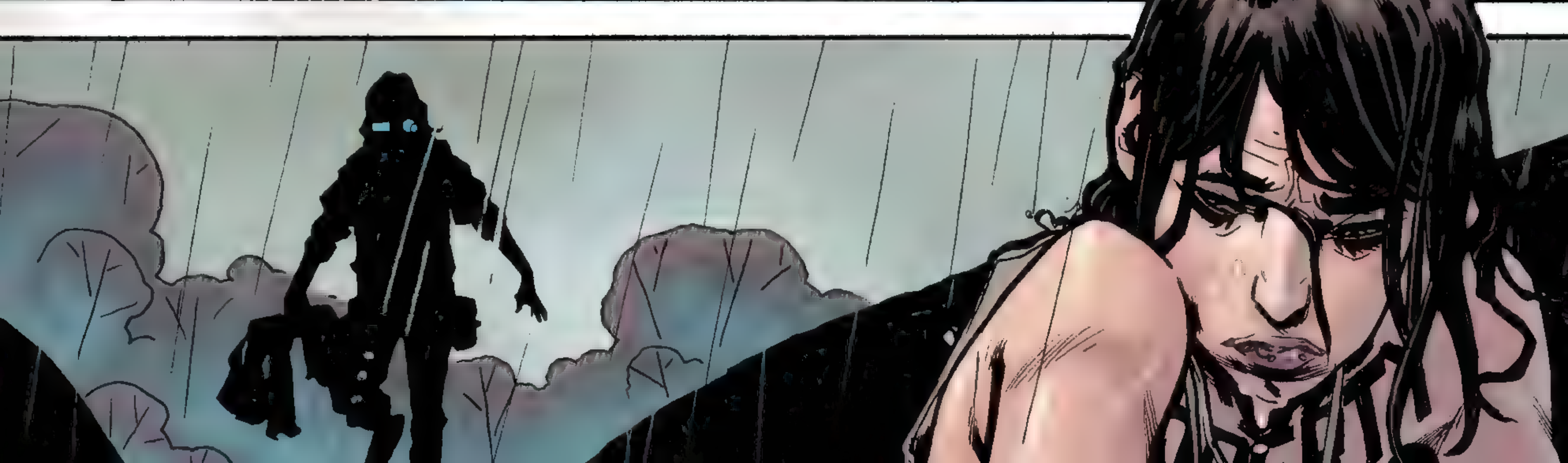
GATHER THE ARMY'S FULL STRENGTH! THE EXTERMINATION WILL BEGIN IN **THREE DAYS!**

MY LORD, I BELIEVE I CAN GET THE REBELS TO BRING THE MASK TO **US**.

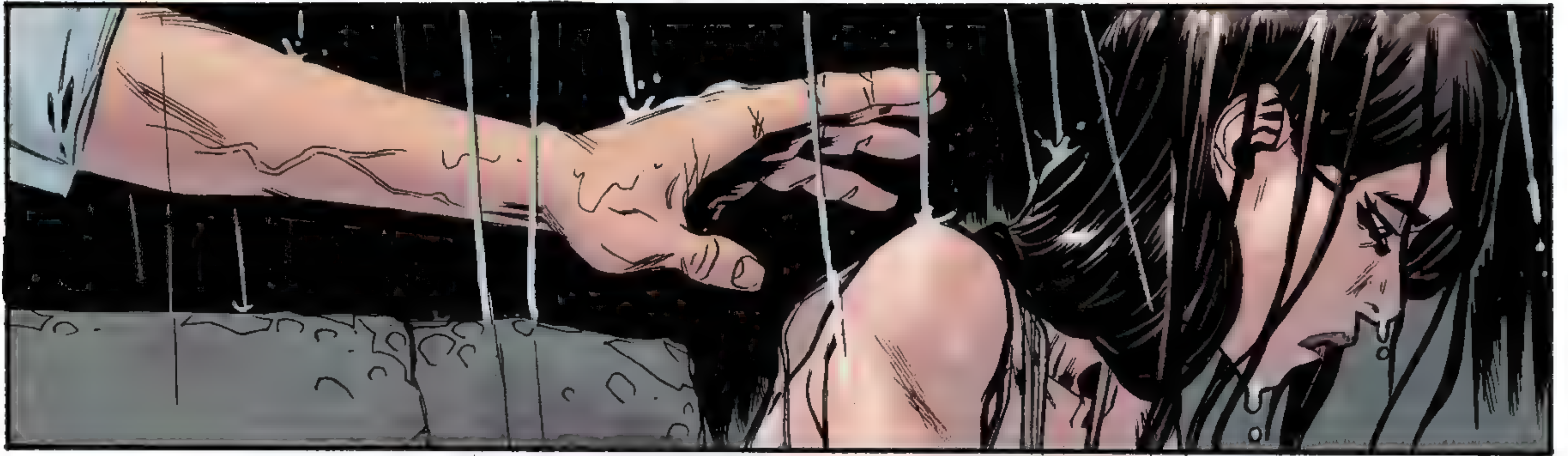


WALK WITH ME, GLETKIN... AND HAVE YOU SEEN BARRABAS? VERY UNLIKE HIM TO MISS A BRIEFING OF THIS IMPORTANCE.

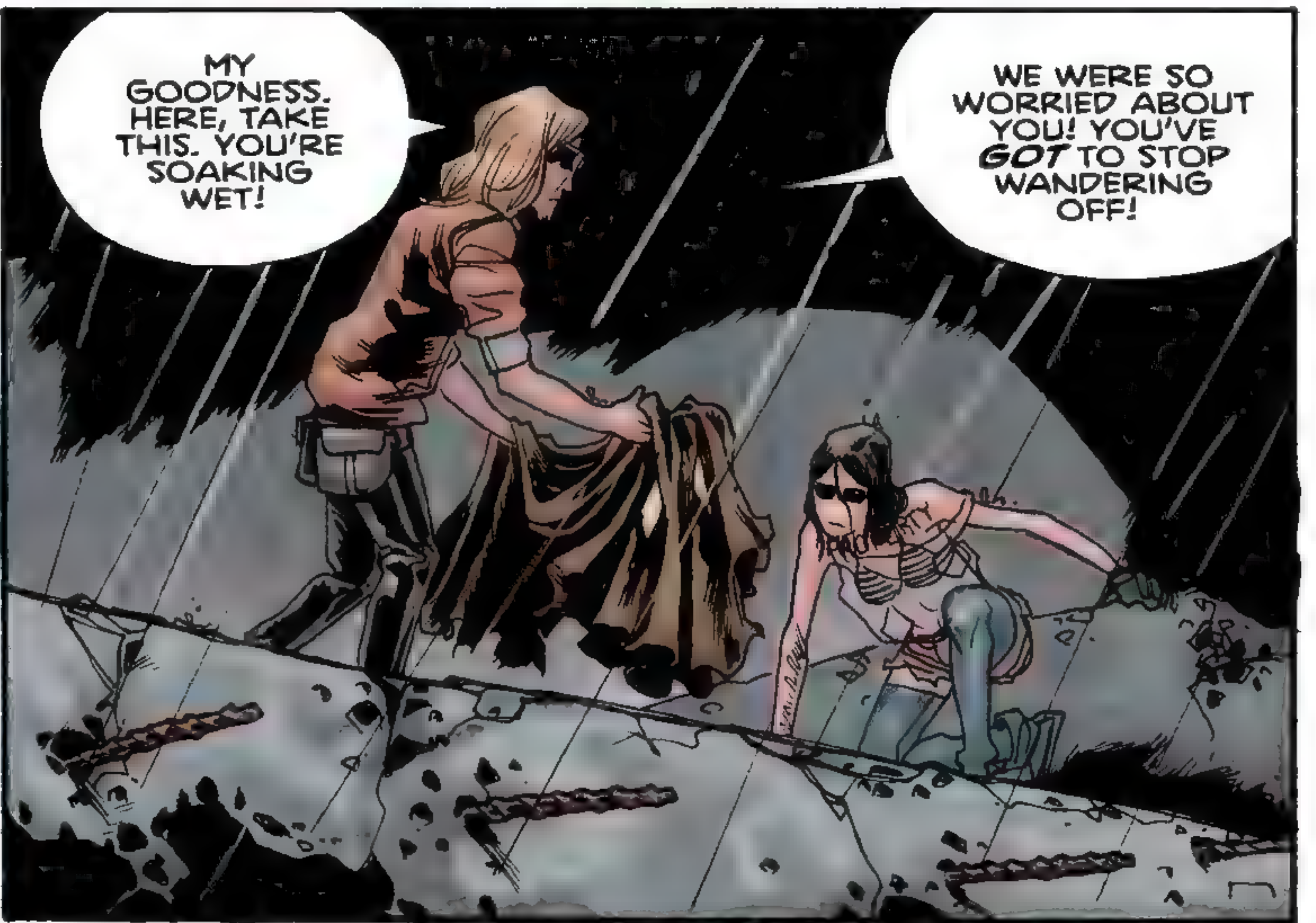








ORCHID!  
BE CAREFUL!  
IT LOOKED  
LIKE YOU WERE  
ABOUT TO  
GO OVER THE  
EDGE!



MY  
GOODNESS.  
HERE, TAKE  
THIS. YOU'RE  
SOAKING  
WET!

WE WERE SO  
WORRIED ABOUT  
YOU! YOU'VE  
**GOT** TO STOP  
WANDERING  
OFF!



YOU *KNOW*  
IT'S NOT SAFE  
OUT HERE.  
WOLFE'S  
SCOUTS ARE  
EVERYWHERE!



I...I'M  
EMPTY, SIMON.  
THEY'RE **ALL**  
GONE AND  
IT'S MY—

COME. LET'S  
FIND ANZIO. HE  
EXPROPRIATED A FEW  
MORE MECH HORSES  
THIS MORNING! THAT'S  
GOOD, RIGHT? HE  
ALWAYS HAS A WAY  
OF CHEERING *ME*  
UP!

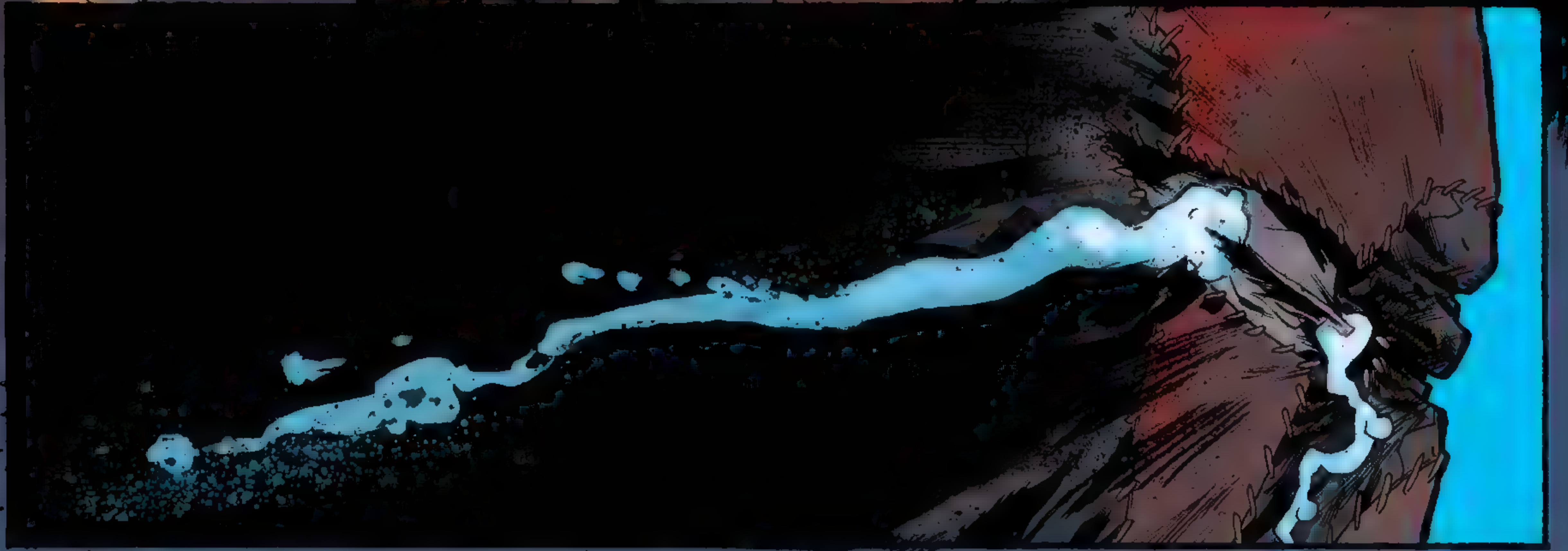




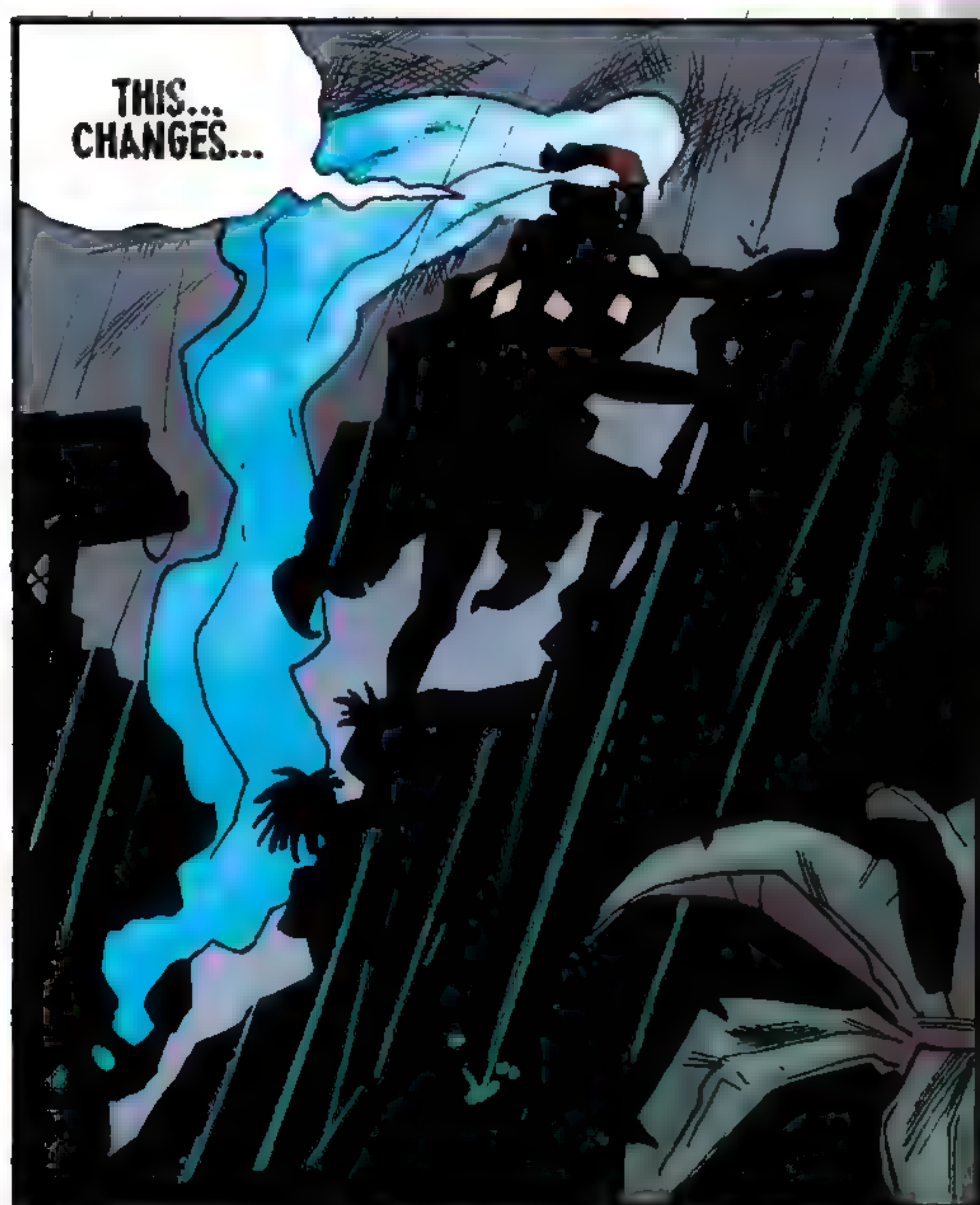
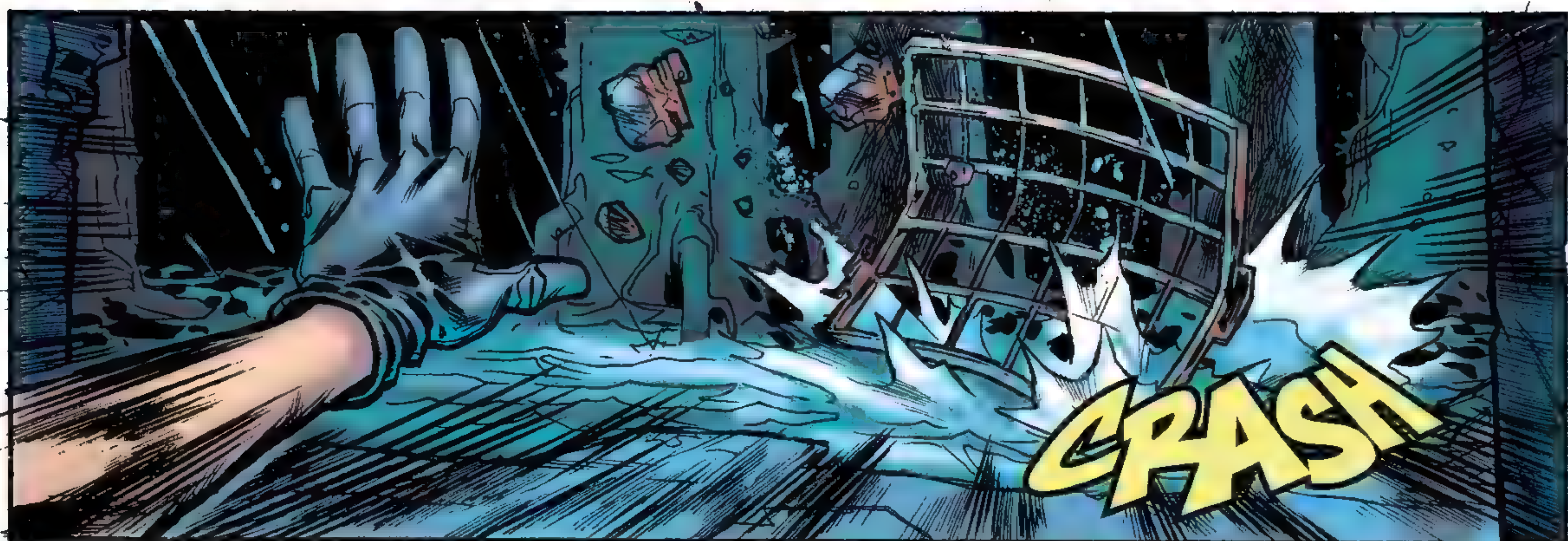
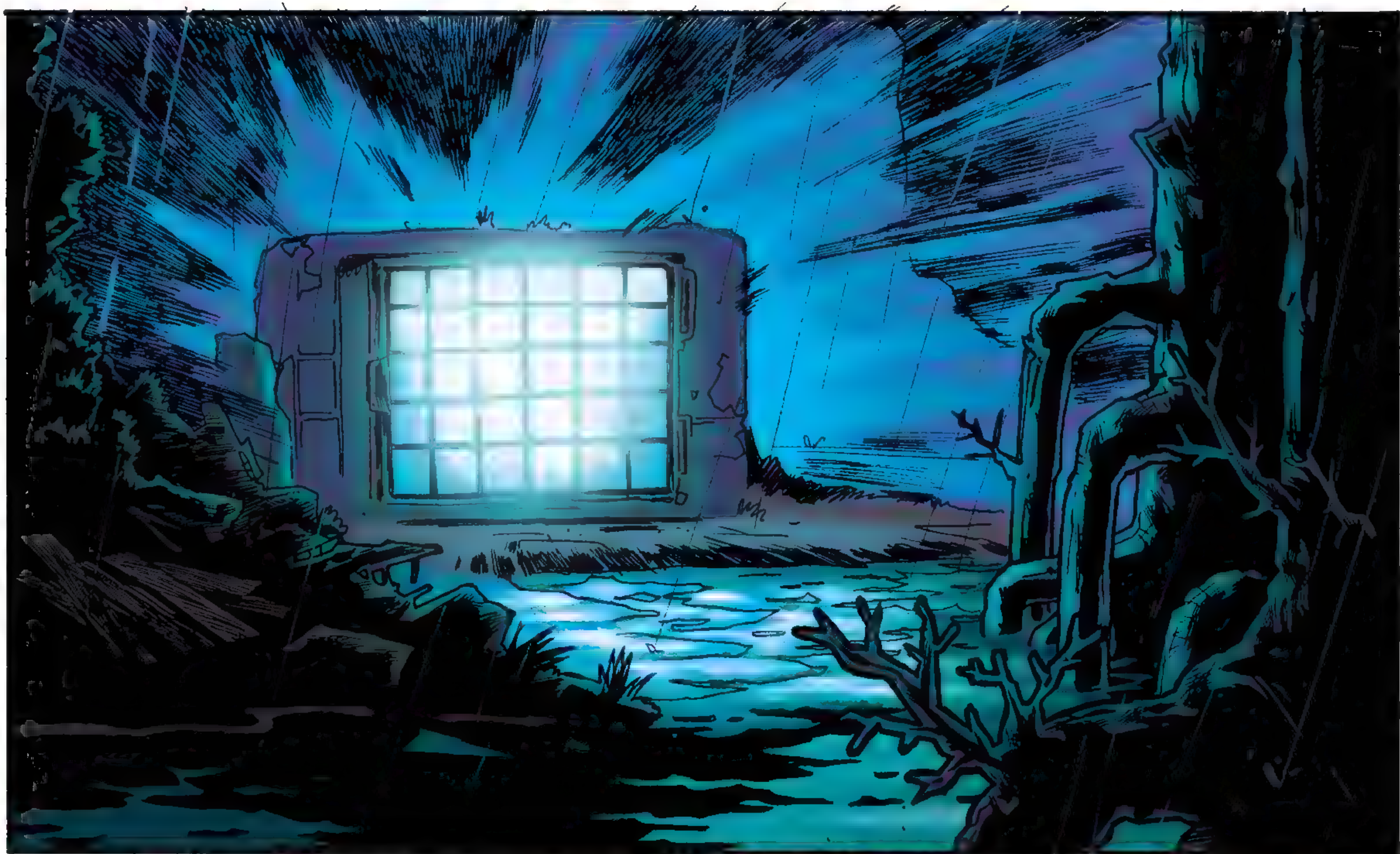















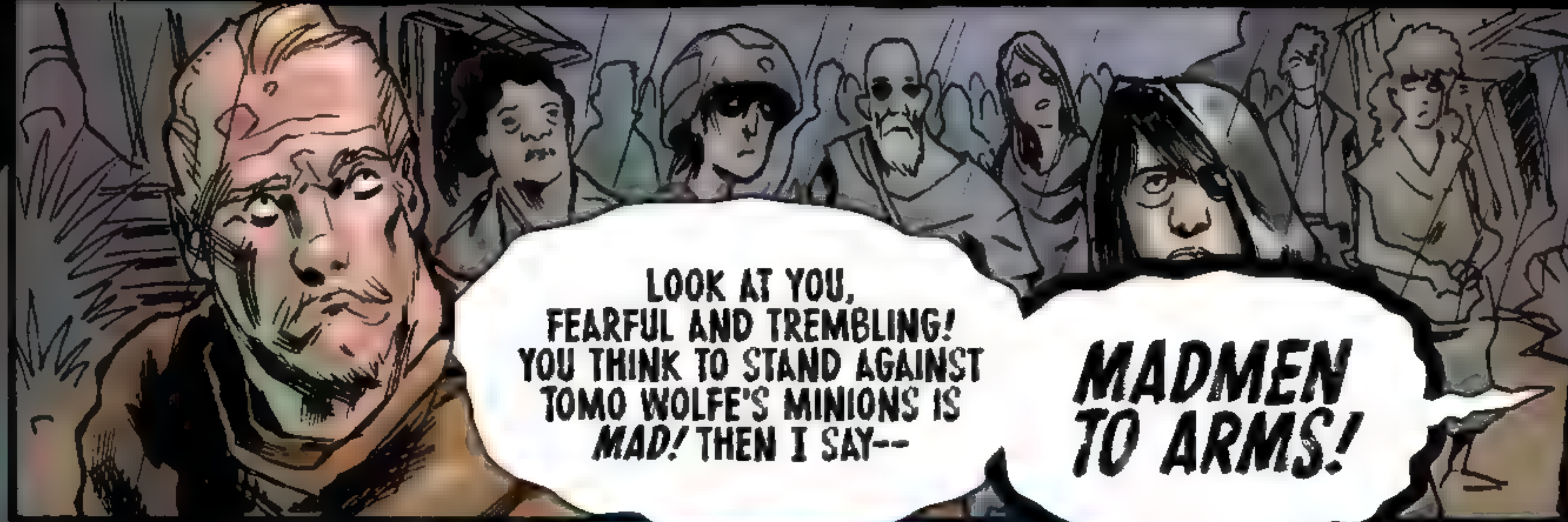


BRIDGE  
PEOPLE! COME  
OUT! *HIDE* NO  
MORE!

IN THE  
MORNING, TOMO  
WOLFE'S ARMY WILL  
MAKE ITS FINAL  
ASSAULT!

WE ARE  
OUTNUMBERED!  
WE ARE UNARMED!  
WE ARE WITHOUT  
TIME OR HOPE!  
YES...WE WILL  
ALL BE DEAD  
TOMORROW!


HOW THEN TO  
DIE? ON OUR KNEES,  
COWERING AND ALONE?  
OR WILL WE STAND  
TOGETHER? WILL WE  
FIGHT TOGETHER AS  
A PEOPLE?



LOOK AT YOU,  
FEARFUL AND TREMBLING!  
YOU THINK TO STAND AGAINST  
TOMO WOLFE'S MINIONS IS  
*MAD!* THEN I SAY--

**MADMEN  
TO ARMS!**





"HAVE COURAGE, FOR I WILL  
LEAD YOU IN THE BATTLE  
THAT COMES AT DAWN!"

"THE LEGEND OF THE MASK  
IS *TRUE*. ITS POWER IS  
*REAL*. I HAVE BEEN IN  
CHAINS MY WHOLE LIFE  
AND I WILL BE IN CHAINS  
NO MORE! IF YOU ARE  
TOO COWARDLY TO FIGHT,  
THEN I WILL FIGHT ALONE.

"BUT I SENSE  
STRENGTH IN YOU,  
A STRENGTH YOU DO  
NOT KNOW! LET US  
FIGHT *TOGETHER* AS  
AN ARMY OF *SHADOW  
REBELS*--AND IN OUR  
FINAL HOUR LET'S  
TAKE THOSE  
BASTARDS DOWN  
WITH US!"

"FOR THE WORLD HAS  
BEEN INHERITED NOT  
BY THE *GOOD*, NOT BY  
THE *MEEK*, BUT BY THE  
*TERRIBLE*. THERE MIGHT  
BE A *BETTER WORLD*,  
ONE DAY, BUT NONE OF  
US WILL LIVE TO SEE IT!"

"HEAR ME NOW!  
WE ARE WITHOUT  
HOPE AND SO WE  
ARE *FREE*. FREE TO  
SHED THIS EXISTENCE  
IN A BLAZING FIRE  
OF *REVENGE*.

"SO CRY *REBELLION*  
FROM EVERY ROOFTOP  
AND HOVEL! SOME  
FOOL ONCE TOLD ME  
THAT THE *ESSENCE* OF  
REBELLION IS *LOVE*. IT  
IS *NOT*. REBELLION IS  
A *HAMMER*, WHICH  
WE WILL USE TO  
CRUSH OUR ENEMIES  
COME THE DAWN!"

"WE DO NOT  
SEEK LIBERTY.  
WE SEEK ONLY  
*DESTRUCTION*.  
AND THROUGH  
DESTRUCTION  
WE WILL BE  
LIBERATED.

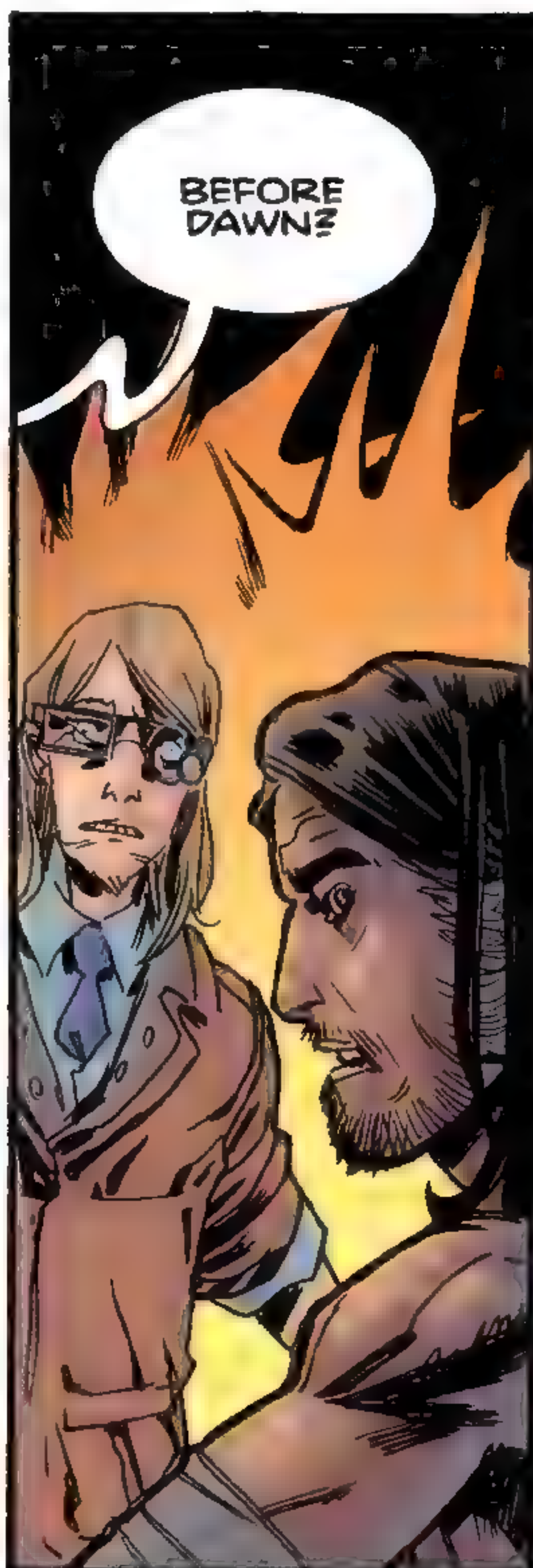
"NO, I AM NOT  
GENERAL CHINA.  
GENERAL CHINA IS  
DEAD. I AM ONE OF  
YOU. I AM ALL OF  
YOU. CALL ME...  
**ORCHID.**

"I WILL BE YOUR *ANGEL OF  
RETRIBUTION*. I WILL BE YOUR  
*WARRIOR SAINT*. FOLLOW ME  
AND LET OUR FOES TREMBLE  
AT OUR COMING!"

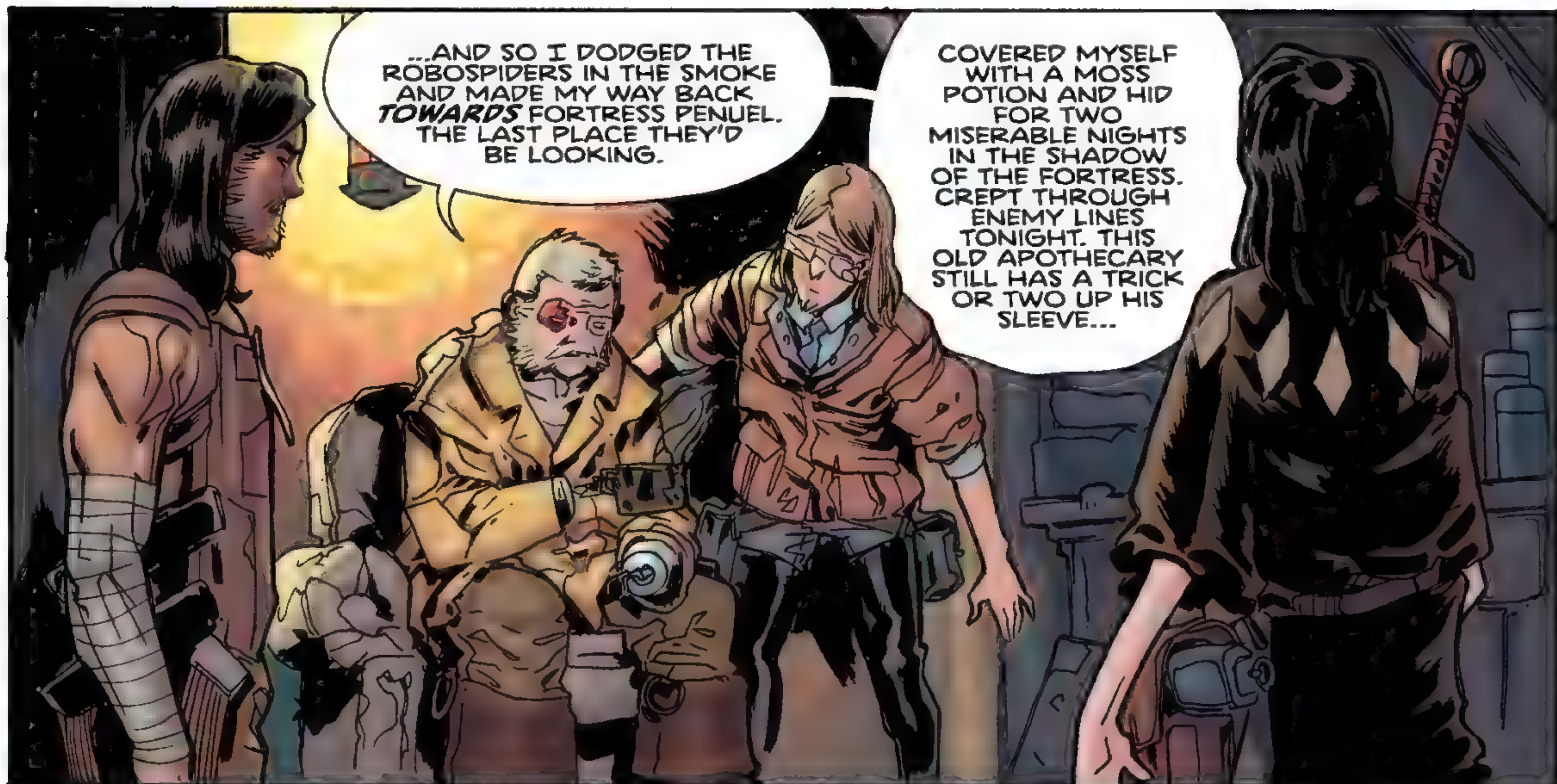
"FOR THIS IS NOT A  
FIGHT FOR WHAT WILL  
*BE*. THIS IS A FIGHT  
TO DESTROY ALL  
THAT'S GONE WRONG.

"THIS FIGHT IS NOT TO  
BUILD A BETTER WORLD--  
*IT'S TO DESTROY  
THIS ONE.*"














BRIDGE  
PEOPLE! THERE WILL  
BE **NO TOMORROW**. THE  
**BATTLE OF THE BRIDGES**  
IS AT HAND! THE SUN  
RISES ON OUR  
LAST DAY.

I WAS A  
PROSTITUTE AND A  
SLAVE FOR THEIR  
PLEASURE AND THEIR  
PROFIT BUT I AM **NO**  
**ONE'S** PROPERTY TODAY!  
WE WERE THE DIRT  
BENEATH THEIR FEET...  
DOCILE AND FIGHTING  
AMONG OURSELVES  
OVER CRUMBS. BUT  
LOOK AT US  
**NOW!**

VALKS AND  
BEGGARS! ADDICTS  
AND CRIMINALS! THE  
HUNGRY AND THE  
FORGOTTEN! THE BROKEN  
AND THE HOMELESS!  
STANDING SHOULDER TO  
SHOULDER AGAINST  
THE COMING  
ONSLAUGHT...

**TAKE HEART,**  
FOR WE ARE **NO LONGER**  
ISOLATED, NO LONGER ALONE.  
IN OUR **FINAL HOUR** AT LAST  
WE HAVE ONE ANOTHER. AND  
**TOGETHER** WE WILL MEET  
WHATEVER COMES!

BUT WILL  
WE WAIT HERE  
LIKE LAMBS  
BRACING FOR  
SLAUGHTER?

**NO! TODAY**  
WE WILL **STRIKE**  
**BACK** AT OUR  
TORMENTORS!

I NEED  
**EIGHT MARTYRS**  
TO FOLLOW ME INTO  
THE TEETH OF THE  
STORM!

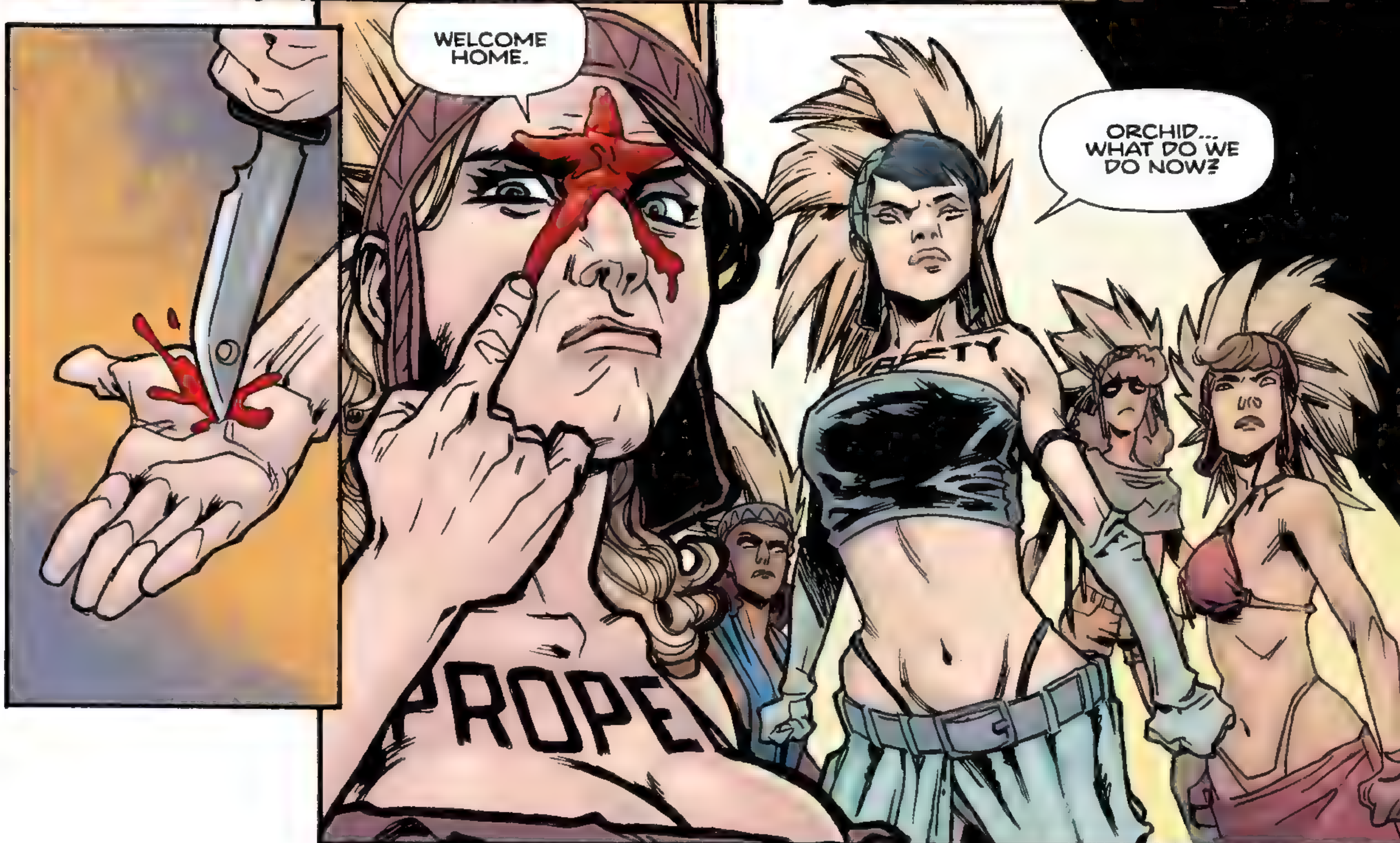
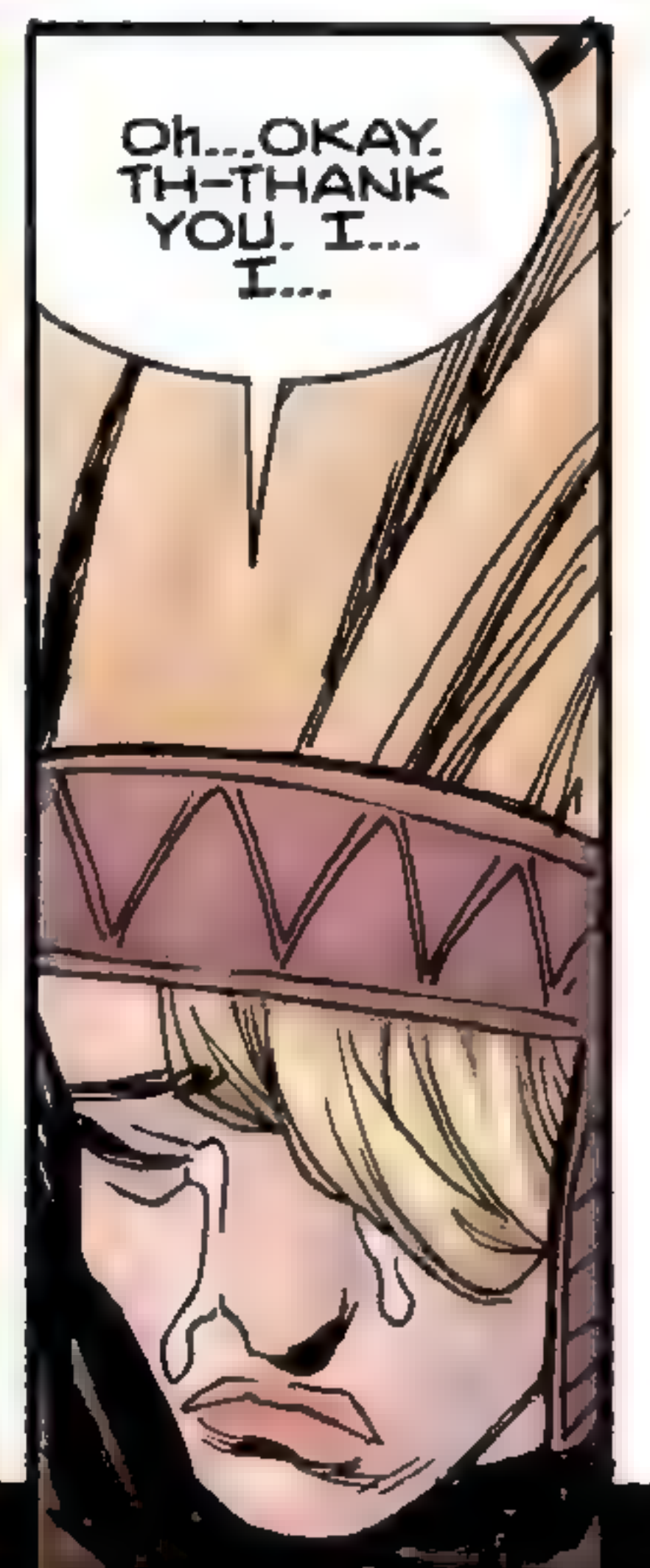
WE WILL FIGHT OUR  
WAY THROUGH THE **HEART**  
OF WOLFE'S ARMY AND INTO  
THE DEPTHS OF FORTRESS  
PENUEL! THERE OUR **ONE**  
**HOPE** REMAINS.

TOMO WOLFE  
DOES NOT KNOW IT...  
BUT WE ARE COMING  
FOR HIM!









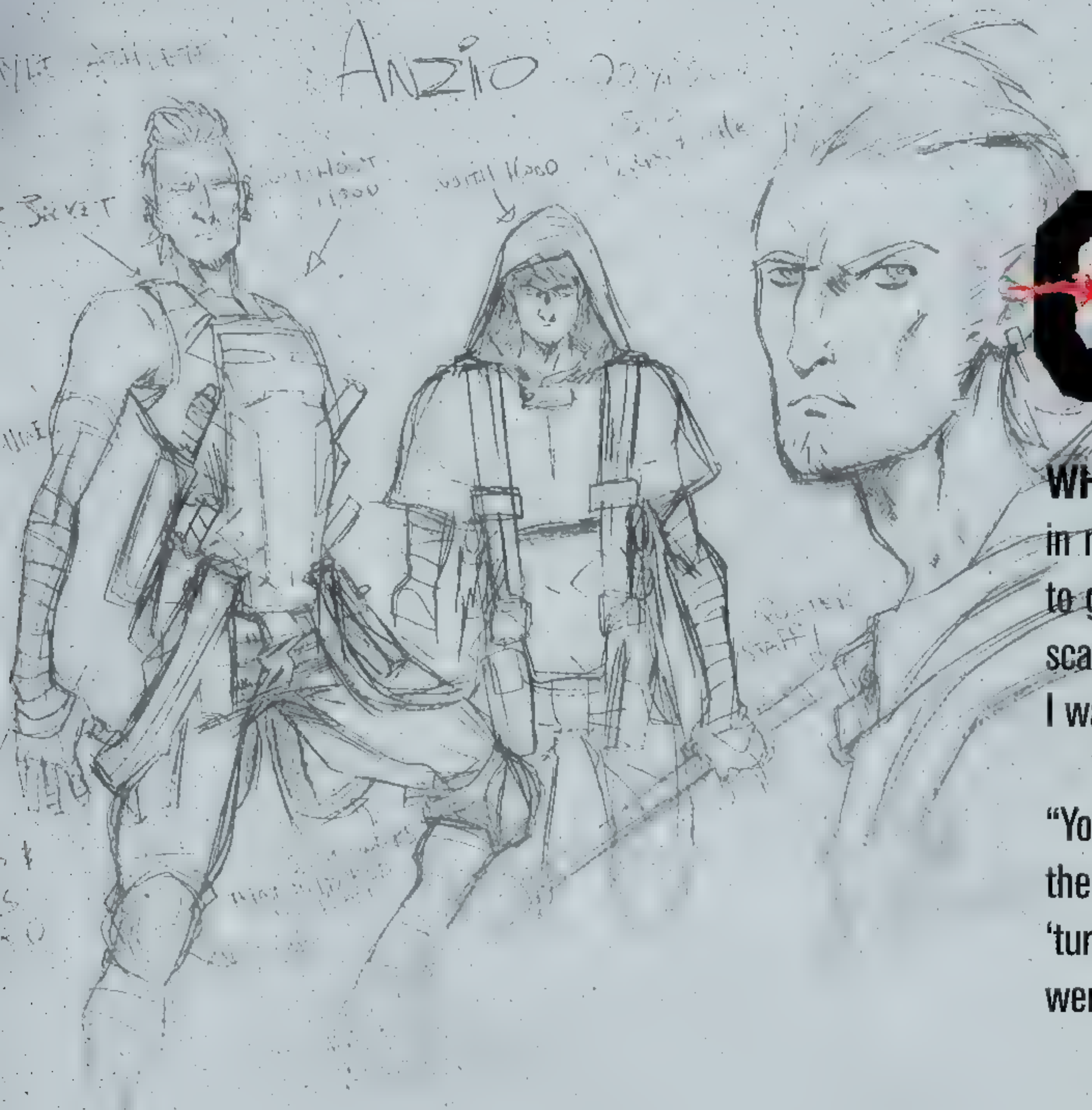


"NOW  
WE GO TO  
**WAR!!**"



KNOW YOUR ROLE





# THE MAKING OF ORCHID

WHEN I WAS THIRTEEN YEARS OLD, the KKK hung a noose in my family's garage. I woke up for school that day, ran out to get my bike, and BOOM, there it was. I was scared. Super scared. Many nights after that incident, I couldn't sleep because I was afraid the Klan would come back.

Years later, I told the story to a friend in college. He said, "You're a pacifist, right?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "Okay. Well, if the Klan comes down your driveway tonight, would you rather 'turn the other cheek' or would you rather me and my friends were in the bushes with baseball bats?"

That stumped me.

Greed, anger, altruism, bigotry, religious zealotry, obedience to orders, mental illness, hunger, fear, resistance, revenge. There are many motivations that cause people to turn to violence.

But when if ever is violence legitimate? And who decides? And is it possible to create a peaceful world by violent means?

And how to best even consider the issue? Rational inquiry or sweat lodge visions? Cold logic or immersion in poetry? Instinct? Reason? Prayer?

I've chewed on these questions my whole life. Explored them in my music . . . and in this book. And, I admit, I still haven't come up with any answers. Why?

Pressure. Subtle yet pervasive pressure. It's there from the earliest days in school. Echoed in consumerist culture. Given weight by omnipresent propaganda. Pressure. To make you feel helpless. Your role is simple, clearly defined, and comfortable: ratify decisions and consume. Or opt out and fall through the cracks.

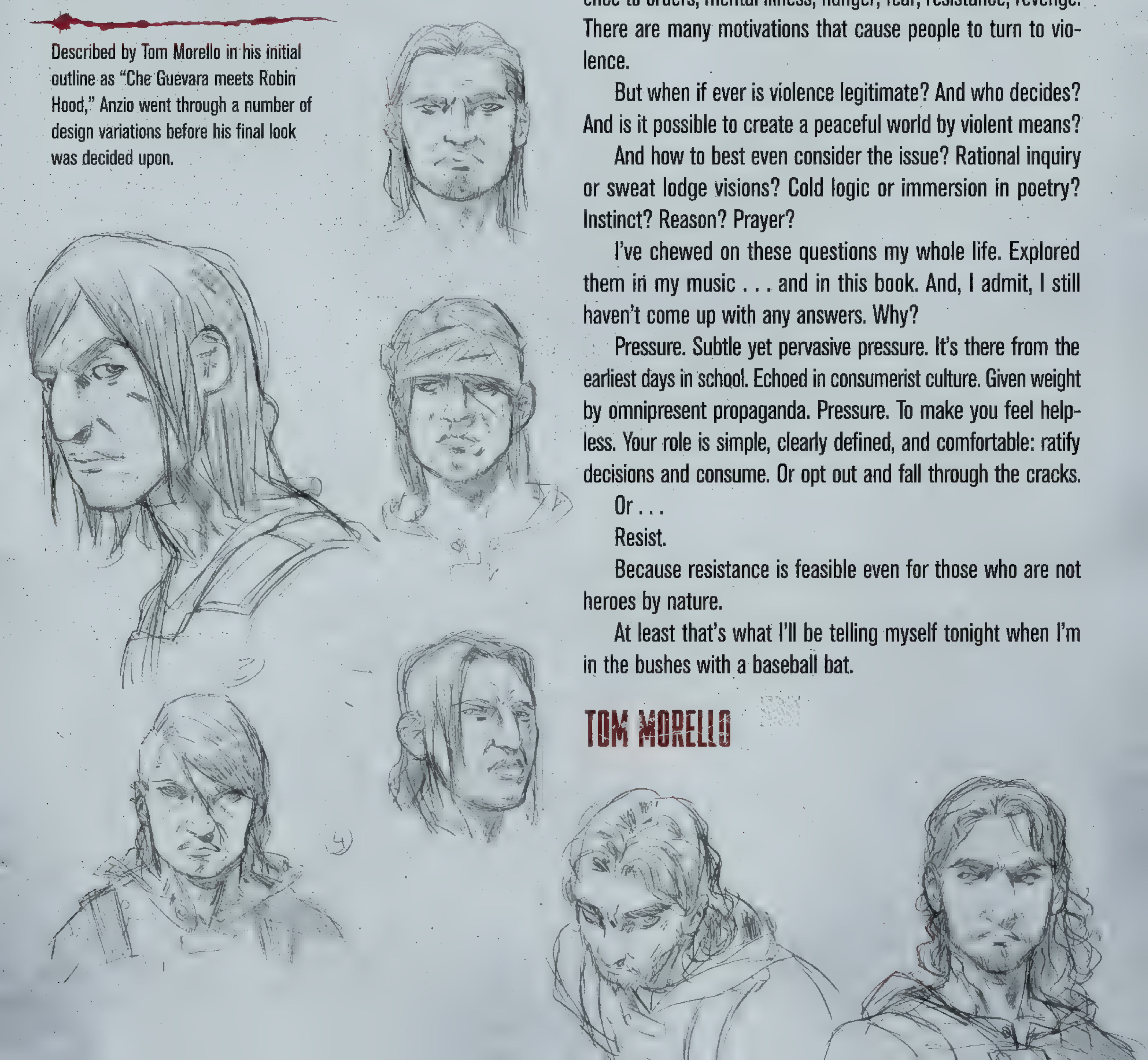
Or . . .

Resist.

Because resistance is feasible even for those who are not heroes by nature.

At least that's what I'll be telling myself tonight when I'm in the bushes with a baseball bat.

**TOM MORELLO**



Described by Tom Morello in his initial outline as "Che Guevara meets Robin Hood," Anzio went through a number of design variations before his final look was decided upon.

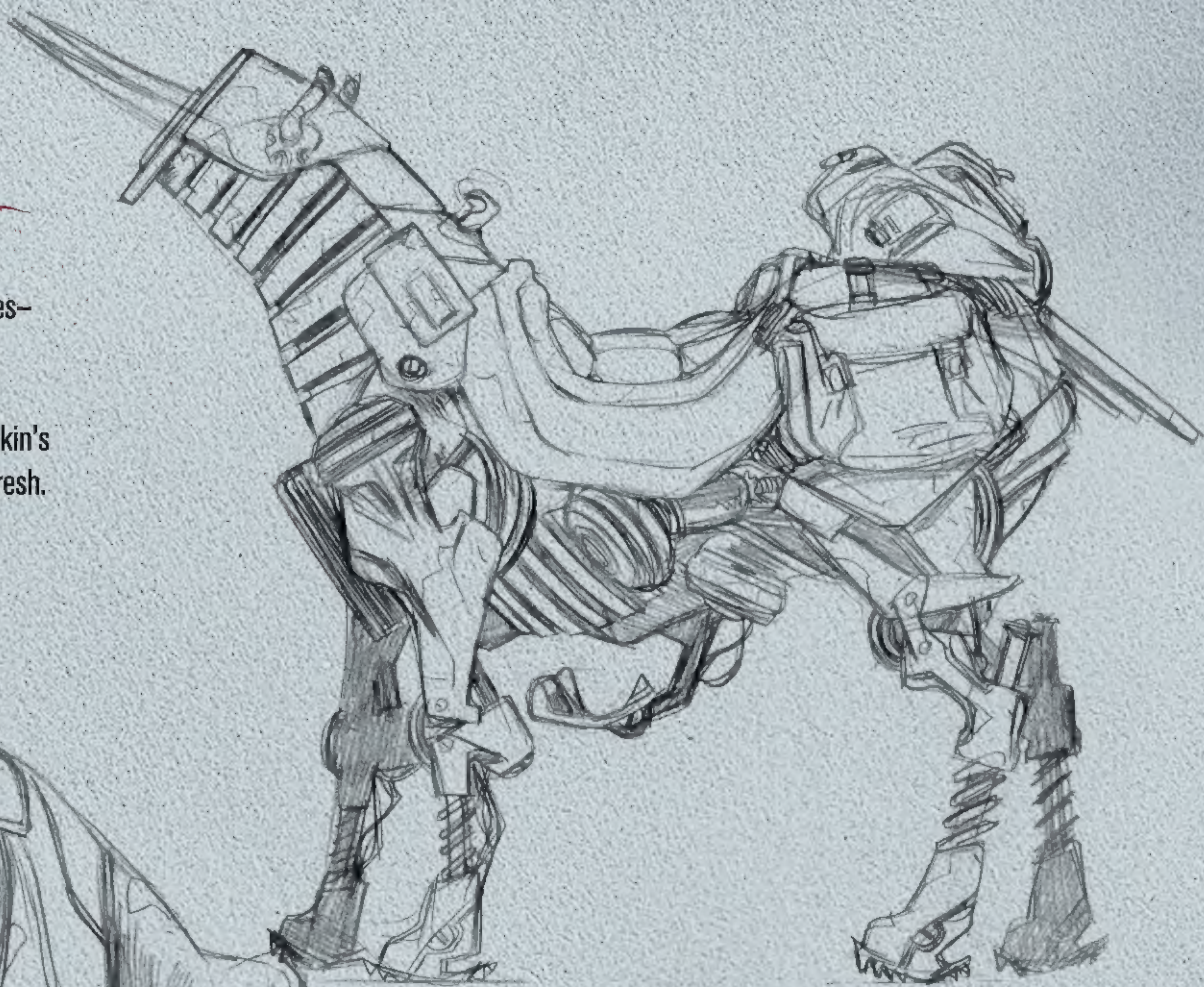
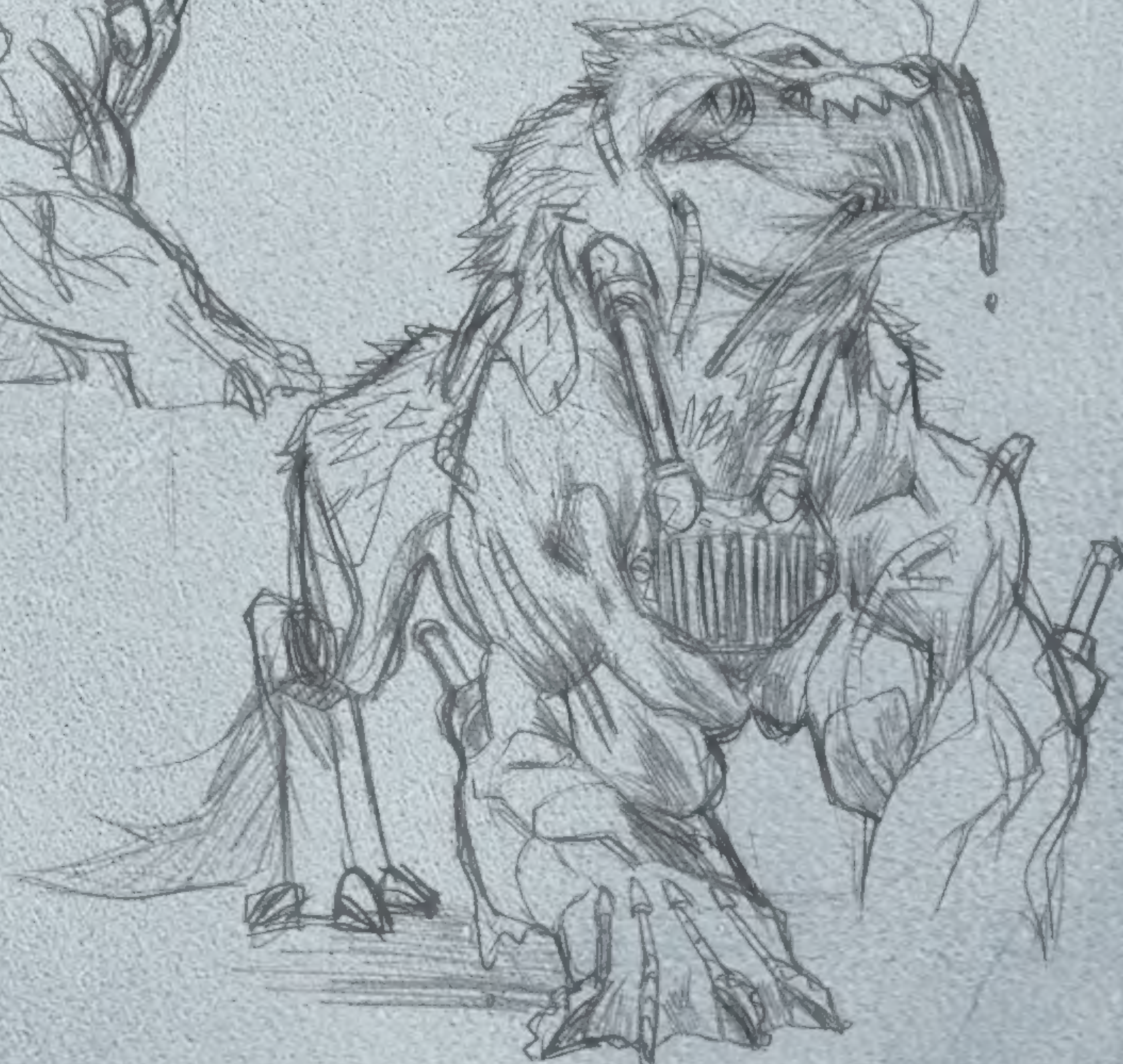


**AT RIGHT:** Scott Hepburn's designs for some of Tomo Wolfe's fearsome machines—the steeds used by Don Gletkin and the gargoyles that adorn Fortress Penuei.

**BELOW:** Hepburn's design work on Gletkin's loyal half-machine, half-monster Sire Varesh.



SIRE  
VARESH





WESTIN

Burn scar  
NO EYEBROW

RINGS  
FASTENERS  
FOR EASY  
GRABBING



**MORE DESIGNS FROM THE HEPBURN:**

The apothecary of Gath, Opal's old ally Westin, a former hero of the rebellion, and his burly, knife-slinging, swamp-gladiator compatriot, Feathers—a radiation-mutated giant of a man.

WESTIN

FEATHERS



# THE FIGHT HAS ONLY JUST BEGUN!

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ORCHID VOLUME 1

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ORCHID VOLUME 3 SUMMER 2013

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Prices and availability subject to change without notice.

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**"BEYOND BRILLIANT. IF EVER THERE WAS A PERFECT COMIC, THIS WOULD BE IT. THERE IS SO MUCH HEART AND INSPIRATION ON EACH PAGE, IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO NOT BECOME FULLY IMMERSSED IN THE STORY AND THE CHARACTERS."** —[BAMFAS.COM](http://BAMFAS.COM)

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# TOM MORELLO'S ORCHID

**THE FIGHT FOR JUSTICE** starts when someone starts it. And this fight starts . . . NOW.

Having nothing left to lose, Orchid—a young woman on a transformative journey from streetwise prostitute to fierce warrior—is hell bent on revenge against an oppressive dictator. She unwittingly forms an alliance with an unlikely hero named Simon and a mysterious warrior, Opal. In a world divided by extreme wealth and abject poverty, what chance does this small force have against a society so cleverly constructed against them?

The adventure continues in this second installment of Tom Morello (*Rage Against the Machine*, *The Nightwatchman*) and Scott Hepburn's (*Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic*) groundbreaking work whose heroes must confront unspeakable beasts, pitiless violence, and overwhelming odds as they attempt to reclaim their lives and their world.

**"[SCOTT] HEPBURN REALLY KNOWS HOW TO MAKE A READER FEEL SOMETHING."**

—[DAILYBLAM.COM](http://DAILYBLAM.COM)

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